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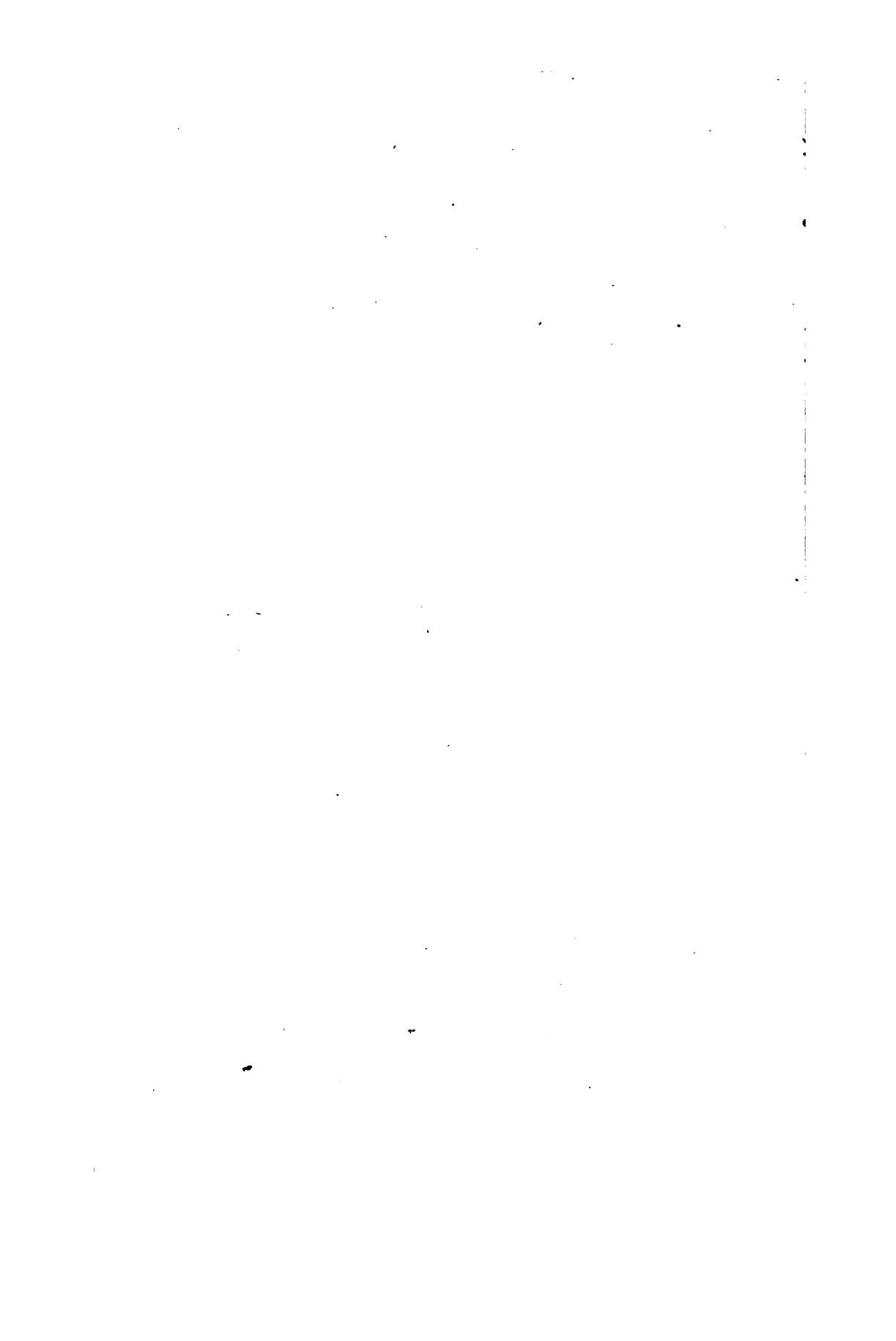


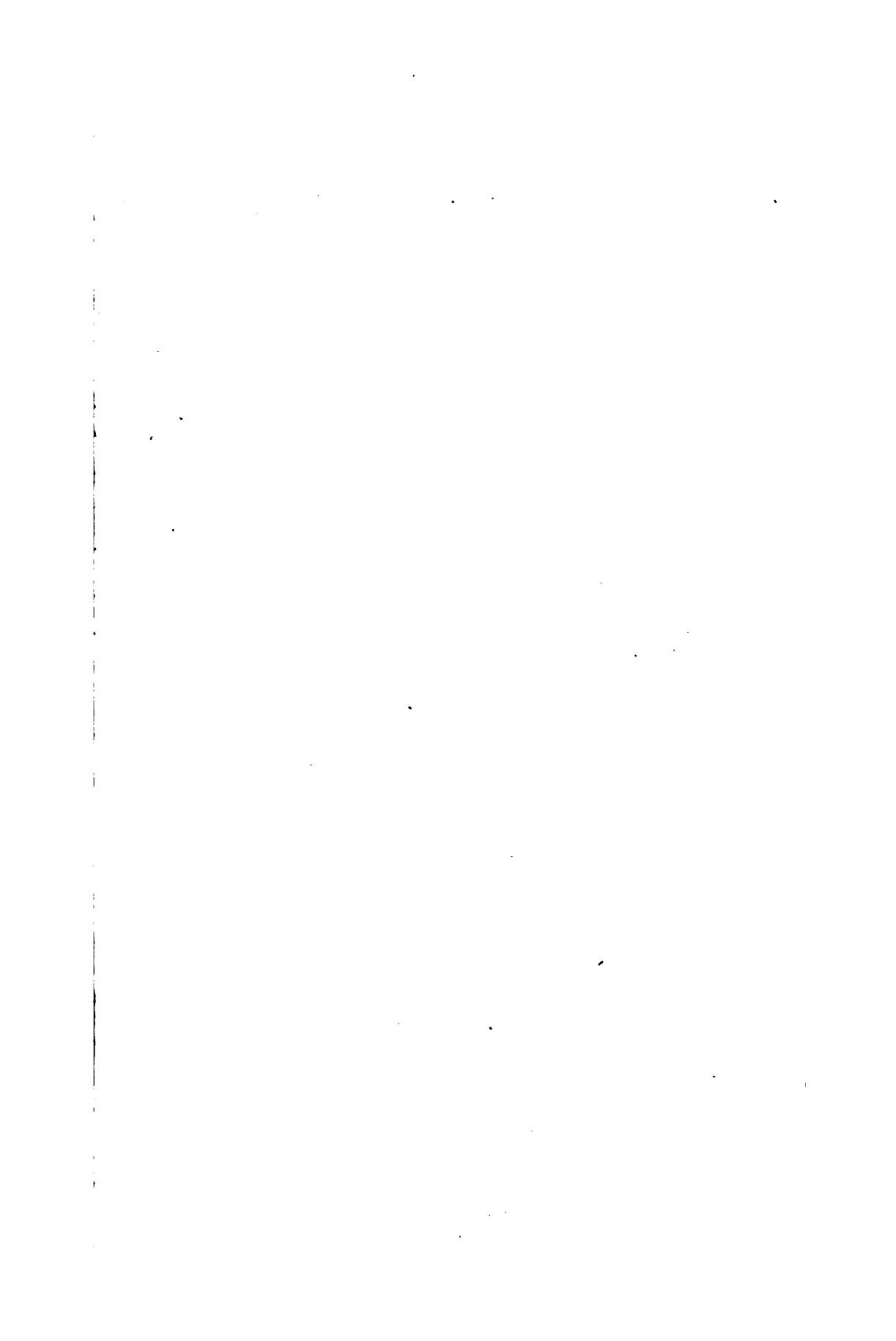
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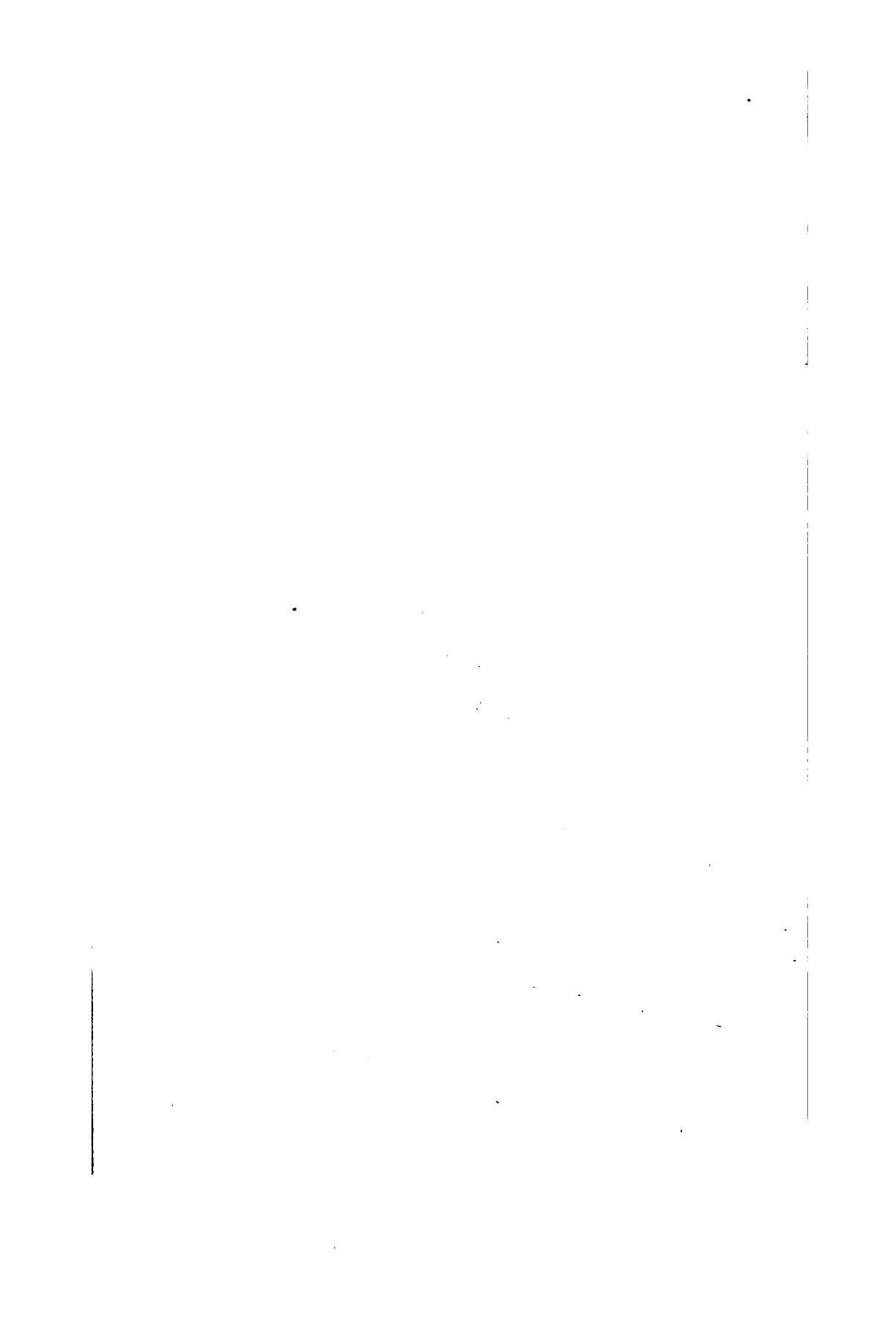
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FIELD MARSHAL G.H. GREY

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON, K.C.

&c. &c. &c.

L I F E
OR
FIELD MARSHAL, HIS GRACE
THE
DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

EMBRACING HIS
CIVIL, MILITARY, AND POLITICAL CAREER
TO THE PRESENT TIME.

EDITED BY
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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, STRAND.



**TO GENERAL
THE RIGHT HON. LORD HILL,**

G.C.B., G.C.H., & K.C.,

**GENERAL COMMANDING-IN-CHIEF, COLONEL OF THE ROYAL REGIMENT
OF HORSE GUARDS, &c. &c.,**

**THIS WORK
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.**



PREFACE.

IT was the opinion of some of the noblest writers of antiquity, that the lives of distinguished contemporaries—the great men of all times—formed a subject of the highest national interest and importance. Nor was it only in relation to after periods, but as an example to the age in which they lived, that it became their ambition to celebrate living worth—to hold up brilliant intellect and daring action to the emulation and applause of mankind. For this reason they sought to invest the subject with a dignity and grandeur of sentiment calculated to produce deep and lasting impression—to excite the nobler passions, rouse patriotism, a sense of independence, and love of country.

In drawing characters whom they considered worthy of commemoration, the old classic writers were rather anxious to exhibit them as the teachers and benefactors of the existing generation, and through their influence—of the future, than to

obtrude the writer's individual views and opinions, or to enter into general dissertation upon subjects not immediately connected with their main design. By adhering to a clear and full narrative of facts, closely interwoven with their "high argument" in all its bearings; by drawing light from other sources only to illustrate one distinct mind and character, they laboured to perform the duty of correct report and impartial commentary, in preference to entering into general reasonings and disquisitions, and in so far becoming rather biographers of themselves, than of their principals, and not unfrequently presenting the latter in a secondary point of view.

Works written upon this general plan are exceedingly pleasing when confined to pieces of autobiography; but the effect is different when the object in view ought to be to represent other characters in their full proportions before the public eye. It becomes then a biographer's duty to supply the *entire text*, as it were of their lives—the full volume of their minds—containing their words and actions, while he confines his own views to impartial display, and a careful estimate and summary of events.

If the simple duties pointed out, and the distinction here made between biographies of a general character, resembling history more nearly than a narrative of lives, and pure biography, in which individual character only is studiously illustrated; it follows that the presence of the illustrator should never be unnecessarily obtruded; that it is his office only to exhibit and to explain; in short, to tell the story, by grouping

the figures, in the most striking points of view, placing them under the boldest lights, or the deepest shades, and permitting no voice, except in explanation of the one commanding figure, the all-absorbing theme of the historic piece, to be heard. Let his prevailing topic be the mind and actions which he has deemed worthy to be painted in living characters before the eyes of posterity ; and let the painter, as far as possible, be the same whose life he has chosen to exhibit.

If, then, we may venture to place old Greek and Roman models in competition with more modern authorities and ideas,—especially of some of our continental neighbours,—the simple plan pursued in the following work, of showing the Duke of Wellington in his own dress, as he was and is,—and not as we might wish to make him appear,—will meet, if not with approbation, with some degree of deference and attention, perhaps, from its novelty. Never a violent party man, he will here show in word and action, that frank and manly spirit which commands the respect of all parties ; he will be seen to occupy a more prominent and commanding station than he is generally supposed to have attained—to take a leading part in the grand historic drama which astonished the world,—and he will appear in bolder and stronger lights than have hitherto been thrown upon the biographical canvass in which he is represented.

The strong and decided features which mark the character of the Duke as a general, a statesman, and a man, will be brought into fuller relief, and, in addition to the salient points, the finer shades and lights will be found to give harmony to the whole.

The records which this extraordinary man has himself given us have been so applied, as to make him the writer of his own life,—the historian of his own actions,—of the characters, events, and circumstances by which he was surrounded, and from amidst which he rose, like some colossal genius to direct the storm of war, to decide the grand question regarding the independence or the subjugation of Europe.

He will be seen in the following pages as he really appeared on the scene of action, calm and self-possessed, seeking no aid but in force and originality of mind,—in variety and extent of resources,—in prompt and rapid action, combined with those rarer characteristics of indomitable patience,—of a genius born to command. For, as a commander alone, the Duke of Wellington stands out in bold relief from amidst his most illustrious contemporaries. To call powers like his into active operation required a lofty sense of duty, strength of will, tenacity of purpose, magnanimity in adversity, moderation in success and victory; — all which he displayed in a degree seldom paralleled. Always opposed to the extremes and to the rancour of party, he possessed judgment and penetration to act in all trials and emergencies with justice and equity, and perfect reliance upon himself.

These qualities it is our earnest desire to bring more fully into view,—to hold up to public applause and admiration a rare example of the combined power of singular talent, good fortune, unshrinking moral courage, and of still rarer patience

and perseverance, proof against every trial and obstacles apparently insurmountable.

Throughout his extraordinary career, he has proved himself one of the few who have preserved that consistency and harmony of character which create respect, which confer dignity, and deserve to exercise a powerful influence upon the opinions and actions of men.

As with all great men, there appears moreover a marked and decided progress in his mind and intellect; we observe his judgment ripen and his powers of reasoning expand. In his civil and political life these characteristics stand out in bold relief from the mediocrity by which he was surrounded.

As the leader of armies, the Duke of Wellington has long been known to all the world; but his qualities as a man, and his conduct as a statesman, have not been so well appreciated as they deserve, because they are not so well understood.

To supply this deficiency is in part the object of the present work; while it endeavours to do honour to the genius which conceived plans both military and political crowned with lasting success at Waterloo, and which decided the destinies of Europe, it will bring the diplomatist and the tutor of kings and princes into the full light which his rare and varied talents deserve.

It is true that works of considerable extent and ability, and by writers of no mean repute, have appeared which embrace every subject connected with the military history of the times; but while they accomplish the object which they have in view, they do not satisfy public curiosity and attention with regard to the individual and the man.

Important as these works are, and valuable as public records, many of them written by men who bore a share in the memorable scenes described, there is no attempt in them to give more than a mere sketch of the character and opinions of the Duke of Wellington; and, in so far it may justly be observed that, though he may have often formed the subject of a portrait, he has never before sat for a whole-length view.

C O N T E N T S.

CHAPTER I.

(INTRODUCTORY—1769 to 1797.)

Biography of great men—Incitements to noble exertions—Examples and parallels—Causes of the interest felt in their success—Boyhood of distinguished men—Intellectual superiority—Genius, its characteristics—Qualities of a great general—Celebrated commanders—English family of the Cowleys or Colleys—Their settlement in Ireland—Public services—Anecdotes—First Earl of Mornington—His early death—Character of Lady Mornington—Of her eldest son, now Marquis Wellesley—His noble and generous conduct—Early life and education of the Hon. Arthur Wellesley—Introduction into military life—Promotion—Raised to the colonelcy of the 33d regiment—Sails for Ostend—Campaign in Holland—Attention to his duties—Brief retrospect and anecdotes—Gallant conduct—Covers the retreat—Early discipline and experience—Anecdotes—General summary—He returns to England—Prepares to sail for India. . . 1

CHAPTER II.

(INDIA—THE MYSORE—1797 to 1799.)

Departure of Lord Mornington for India—Arrival at Calcutta—Colonel Wellesley—Expedition from Bengal—Visit to Madras—Views and opinions—Projects of Tippoo Sultan—State of the Carnatic—Landing at Mangalore—Policy of Tippoo—Failed by the Governor-general—Generous and manly conduct of Lord Mornington—Straightforward conduct—Enlightened views—Wise pre-

cautions—Bold measures—Assembles the army of the Mysore—Important command given to Colonel Wellesley—March of the army—Anecdotes—The advance—Skirmishes and attacks—Battle of Malavelly—Forward movements—Affair of posts—Night attack—Siege of Seringapatam—Brilliant attack of Colonel Wellesley—Storm and surrender—Anecdotes—The forlorn hope—Colonel Dunlop—Gallant conduct and death of the Sultan—Tippoo Sultan's sons—Sir David Baird—Colonel Wellesley appointed governor—High principle and judgment—Treasures—New regulations—Removal of the young princes.

CHAPTER III.

(1800 to 1805.)

The Sultan's seraglio and treasury—Delicate questions—Displeasure of the Governor-general—Appointment to command the troops—Letters—Civil duties—Solidity of his views—Active service—Expedition against Dhoondiah—Success of the campaign—Civil government—Exertions of Colonel Wellesley—Visits different places in the Mysore—Correspondence with his friends—Playful turn of mind—Strict attention to orders—Confidence reposed in him by the Governor-general—Projected expedition to Batavia—Command in the Mysore—Correspondence with the Governor-general and with Lord Clive—Suggestions and plans for the new expedition—Ardour in the public service—Acts on his own responsibility—Incurrs the displeasure of the Governor-general—General Baird—Colonel Wellesley's vindication—Correspondence with his brothers—His affectionate disposition—His candour and frankness—High sense of honour and justice—Affair of General Baird—Illness of Colonel Wellesley—Return to Mysore—Military chiefs—Anecdotes—Active campaign—Successes—Pursuit of the rebel chiefs—Skilful combinations—Restoration of the Peshwah—Diplomatic skill—Justice and humanity—Active war—Comprehension and vigour of mind—His victories in the Deccan—Assaye—Anecdotes—Army of General Lake—Estimable conduct—Private benefactions—Generosity—Effect of his example on his contemporaries—Powers of observation—Suffers from long field service—Interferes in behalf of the vanquished—Summary of the late wars—Favourable results—Progress through the Deccan—His civil policy—And municipal regulations—Prepares to leave India—Takes leave of the army. . . . 68

CHAPTER IV.

(1805 to 1808.)

Returns to England—Defends his brother in parliament—Joins the expedition to Copenhagen—Siege of the city—Successes of the English—Bombardment—Success of Sir A. Wellesley in command of the troops—Returns to England—The Spanish war—Policy of Napoleon—Political retrospect—State of Spain—Parties—Intrigues—Hatred of the French—Insurrection of the people—Apply

CONTENTS.

xiii

to England—Weakness of the British government—Insurrection of the Portuguese—Expedition under Sir Arthur—Progress in Spain and Portugal—Sails from Corunna—Battle of Roliga.	163
--	-----

CHAPTER V.

(1808 to 1814.)

New character of the war—Assistance of the English—They prepare to act—Weakness of the British government—Difficulties to encounter—Movements in Portugal—In Spain—General Wellesley prepares to take the command of the new expedition—His conduct as chief secretary of Ireland—Arrives at Corunna—His unremitting exertions—Decides upon landing in Portugal—His prompt and able measures counteracted by the Portuguese general—Overcomes all difficulties—Proceeds down the Tagus—Correspondence with government, &c.—With Sir H. Burrard—Dispositions for battle—Strictures upon the Portuguese—Defeat of the French at Roliga—Noble traits of conduct—Importance of the victory—Advance of the British general.	190
--	-----

CHAPTER VI.

(1808 to 1814.)

Observations on the battle of Roliga—Skilful combinations—Rapid pursuit—Preparations to engage Junot—Compelled to abandon the design—Attacked by the French—Battle of Vimiero—Compelled to forego the advantages—Arrival of Sir Hew Dalrymple—Armistice—Convention of Cintra—Discontent of the Portuguese—And of England—Anecdotes—Signal exploits—Tribute to British valour—Court of Inquiry—Vindication of Sir Arthur Wellesley—His noble and disinterested conduct—Resumes office—Efforts of Napoleon—Fate of the Spanish armies—Weakness of the ministry—Campaign of Sir John Moore—Causes of its failure—Opinion of Napoleon—Memorable retreat—Victory of Corunna—Death and character of Sir John Moore.	213
---	-----

CHAPTER VII.

[(1809 to 1814.)

Progress of the war in Portugal—Successes of Soult—The Spanish campaign—Defeat of the patriots—Siege of Saragossa—The British in Catalonia—Thanks of parliament—Sir Arthur Wellesley sails for Lisbon—Plan of the campaign—Surprise of Soult in Oporto—Pursuit of the French—Their evacuation of Portugal—Moderate and cautious measures of the British general—Interview with General Cuesta—His impracticable character—Curious anecdotes—Battle of Talavera—Desperate conflict—Defeat of the French—Strange conduct of Cuesta—Difficulties of the British army—On the point of being cut off—In full retreat.	272
--	-----

CHAPTER VIII.

(1809 to 1814.)

- Particulars of the battle—Singular facts—Rare ability and decision of Sir A. Wellesley—Talents for business—Promptness and despatch—Sir R. Wilson and the Portuguese—Loss of an important pass—Policy of the British general—Concentration of the French forces—Admirable measures of the English general—Excellent views of Spanish affairs—Good advice—Sufferings of the army—Spirited remonstrances—Continued retreat—Analogous circumstances—Views of government—Opposition at home—Strictures on the Spanish system—New operations—Indefatigable efforts—Wonderful activity—Positions of the army—State of the Spanish armies—Sir A. Wellesley's attempts to save them—Appeals to the generals and to the juntas—Destruction of successive armies. . . . 328

CHAPTER IX.

(1810 to 1814.)

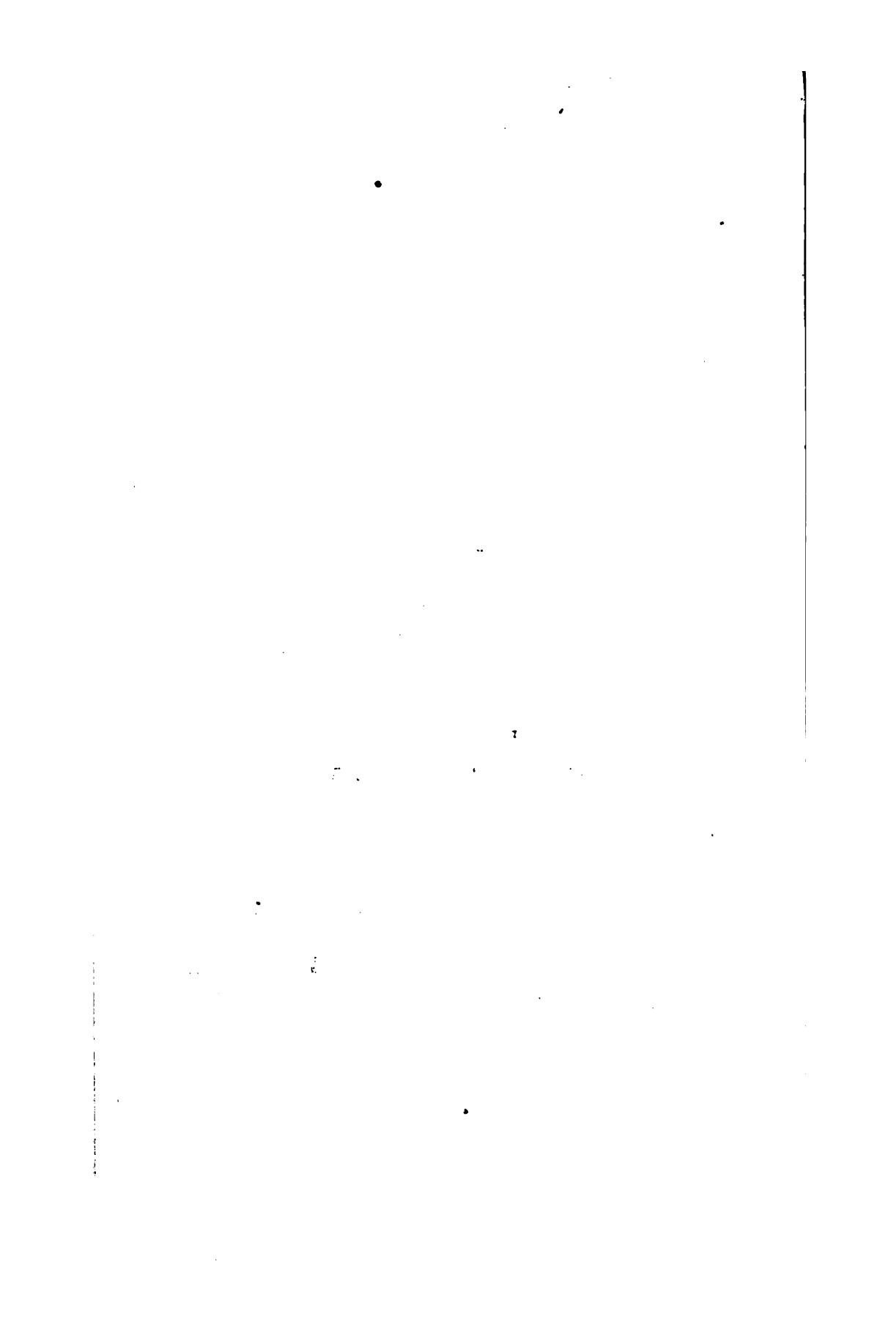
CHAPTER X.

(1810 to 1814.)

- Profound views—Depth of character—Fall of Almeida—Promotion in the army—Opinions of Lord Wellington—Correspondence—Sufferings of the Portuguese—Able remarks—Strictures of Lord Wellington on the regency—Advice to the government—Comprehensive mind—Knowledge of details—On the Spanish system of carrying on the war—Impartial examination of his own opinions—Self-distrust and control—Wonderful harmony of great qualities—Famous retreat—Masterly movement of General Hill—Battle of Busaco—Victory of the British—Massena attempts to turn their position—Retreat of Lord Wellington on Torres Vedras—The famous lines—Strong positions—Winter campaign.** . 446

ILLUSTRATIONS TO VOL. I.

	PAGE
HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON	<i>Frontispiece.</i>
THE MARQUIS WELLESLEY	32
THE STORMING OF SERINGAPATAM	63
PORTRAIT OF NAPOLEON BONAPARTE	174
THE MARQUIS OF ANGLESEY, (LORD PAGET)	259
GENERAL THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD HILL	300
PLAN OF THE SIEGE OF CIUDAD RODRIGO	435
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF YORK, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF	451
THE LINES OF TORRES VEDRAS	481
MAP OF SPAIN AND PORTUGAL, SHOWING THE SEAT OF WAR	<i>End of volume.</i>



L I F E
OR
FIELD-MARSHAL, HIS GRACE
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Biography of great men—Incitements to noble exertions—Examples and parallels—Causes of the interest felt in their success—Boyhood of distinguished men—Intellectual superiority—Genius, its characteristics—Qualities of a great general—Celebrated commanders—English family of the Cowleys or Colleys—Their settlement in Ireland—Public services—Anecdotes—First Earl of Mornington—His early death—Character of Lady Mornington—Of her eldest son, now Marquis of Wellesley—His noble and generous conduct—Early life and education of the Hon. Arthur Wellesley—Introduction into military life—Promotion—Raised to the colonelcy of the 33d regiment—Sails for Ostend—Campaign in Holland—Attention to his duties—Brief retrospect and anecdotes—Gallant conduct—Covers the retreat—Early discipline and experience—Anecdotes—General summary—He returns to England—Prepares to sail for India.

THE minutest particulars relating to the fortunes of distinguished men have justly been esteemed worthy of regard, no less by their contemporaries than by posterity. The contemplation of those actions by which they rose to eminence, drew upon themselves the eyes of their fellow-citizens, and the applause of the country in whose service they laid the groundwork of their reputation, naturally excites a desire

to ascertain the causes which led to their superiority and success. It is a curiosity at once laudable and useful, deeply seated in the principles of human action, and which, awakening the mind to examples deserving imitation, gives wings to hope, fire to emulation, and renewed impulse to that love of excelling which exercises so powerful a dominion over the breast of man. It was, doubtless, this sentiment that made the Iliad of Homer the companion of Alexander's conquests; that engaged the studies of Scipio in his tent, and roused the ambition of Cæsar, at the voice of Greek and Roman fame, to dispute the sovereignty of the world.

This too it was, that like them, impelled the conqueror of Assaye, at Vimiero and at Waterloo, to greatly dare;—to undertake and to achieve things which other commanders would have pronounced impossible; seizing those happy moments which only a man of pre-eminent genius could have perceived, and setting at nought the old-established rules which would have governed a general of inferior powers.*

In perusing the lives of men who have risen by the force of their own character, our interest is excited in proportion as we feel conscious of possessing the same motives, and being actuated by the same passions, which led them to become what they were. Were not this the case we could not so fully sympathize with our subject, or follow through the gradual development of their maturer powers, those early indications of intellectual energy which offered the surest earnest of success. By a kind of reflection of ourselves as it were, in their mirror, we become interested in all they do; we are educated with them, we consult their peculiar bias and turn of mind, we witness their every-day life; their fea-

* This sort of intuitive knowledge of the right moment—the eagle glance and rapid action,—so remarkable throughout the entire career of the Duke of Wellington, was nowhere more conspicuously shown than at Assaye. Colonel Wellesley did not even wait the arrival of Colonel Stevenson; he saw the time to strike, and he struck.

tures, manners, and personal deportment, become familiar to us; and these, in the first instance considered separately, then formed into groups, and finally combined as a whole, present a perfect biographical picture to the mind.

In their anxiety to gratify this natural curiosity, most writers, including even historians up to a recent period, irresistibly tempted by classical authority, have sought to amuse their readers by recounting the fabled dreams and portents, so long believed to have predicted the advent of very extraordinary men. Upon the present occasion, there is no temptation, perhaps, to yield to so popular an example, excepting in the solitary instance of a jocose observation made by the illustrious subject of these memoirs himself; namely, "that he must certainly have been born under an extraordinary planet." There is still less reason to follow the example of some ancient biographers and their servile imitators of modern times, by dwelling upon details of early life which must ever be considered trivial, since experience has proved that precocity of talent is no sure indication of future celebrity.

The boyhood of genius of lofty character, of such as pressed foremost in the race of honour, has seldom been distinguished from that of more ordinary mortals; on the contrary, while juvenile prodigies like other ephemera, have usually proved to be but the passing wonder of the hour, the early days of Shakspeare, of Scott, of Byron, and Marlborough ; of Nelson, Napoleon, and finally, of the illustrious subject of these memoirs, have been signalized by no special signs and wonders; no evidence of mature intellect showing "men of mark and likelihood, predestined to o'erstride the world." Probably, after all, what is so imposingly termed Genius, might be found upon closer analysis to resolve itself into superior energy combined with more than usual strength of volition ; qualities which are inherent in, and dependent upon, some peculiar constitution of the mind.

However this may be, there can be no hesitation in placing

the merits of the great soldier, whose actions have excited the applause and admiration of his country, upon the very highest grounds to which the most brilliant genius can lay claim, even though his youthful character may not have developed any stronger features, or held out any greater promise, than those of hundreds of young men around him. The same observation, as regards precocity of talent, is applicable to the greatest commanders of almost every age. Scipio and Fabius, the one fortunate and daring, the other cautious and wary, gave no early indications of their peculiar genius, whilst these characteristics—more strongly developed as he advanced—are admitted by military judges to have been blended in the comprehensive mind of the English leader. We may say yet more of our great countryman in comparing him with the conqueror of Hannibal (of him who, from the rapidity and combination of his movements, may be regarded as a sort of Napoleon of his age), namely, that in the virtue of clemency the English general was not surpassed by the Roman; as evinced on all occasions by his treatment of the vanquished, and of those whom the fortune of war placed under his protection and control.

The youth, then, of military men can only be an object of interest so far as their education may be supposed to have supplied them with those principles and those maxims of conduct which governed their future actions. Unless the basis of truth, justice, and honour be early laid, valour, talent, the most consummate skill itself, will be found inadequate to obtain important and lasting results. Power, to be enduring, must be directed and supported by great moral as well as intellectual force. This truth, so nobly illustrated in the subject of the following narrative, we shall keep constantly in view. Dominion, we know, may be acquired by artifice or force, but seldom preserved without bringing other means into action, and aiming at other and better objects than personal aggrandizement. A sense of justice and public utility, founded upon the broad basis of the general benefit, will

ever maintain a stern, unyielding conflict with the powers opposed to its inevitable progress; and the fall of ancient empire, like that of imperial France, took its origin from the same causes—the absence of moral conservative power, and, in its place, the establishment of the reign of force, at variance with all known and received ideas of the general welfare founded upon social order. Deprived of moral vigour and character, neither genius the most brilliant, nor dominion the most widely spread, can speculate on existence beyond the hour; and in like circumstances it will be found the same—as Napoleon himself too bitterly experienced—with an army and with its commander.

Military genius, therefore, must possess great moral energy,—a rare combination of qualities, such as are no less essential to form a practical and enlightened statesman. The same comprehensive views which are required to perform ALL the duties of a distinguished general, would doubtless, if directed to other pursuits, attain a high degree of excellence, if not equal success. Vigour of intellect of this calibre may be pronounced almost universal in its application; and thus most celebrated commanders, like professors of the more abstract sciences, are capable of intense thought, and long-continued attention,* added to quickness of observation, and a power of reasoning and combining, which would enable them equally to excel in mechanics, or in more profound mathematical inquiries.

Were there, however, more ample materials than we have before us, we should draw sparingly from incidents relating to the boyhood of one whose maturer years were rendered memorable by a series of events, almost unparalleled in history for grandeur and importance—which changed the destinies of the world, and seemed to partake less of reality

* Very frequently, we are informed by the Duke himself, he was upon horseback during twelve and fourteen successive hours; and not only when engaged in action, but in the camp, and inspecting the lines, he was up at three or four in the morning.

than some splendid fiction of eastern romance. So like a mere vision of the past does the glory of the imperial days of Napoleon, with the heroism, talent, and brilliancy—all the marvellous adventures, the sufferings and oppressions of his ill-starred reign, already begin to appear in our eyes. Besides, when once upon the scene, the rapidity of the incidents and events, springing from the actions of the hero in the grand historic drama we are preparing to represent, carries us along, scarcely allowing us time to breathe, from the thrilling interest excited, as new and startling objects rise before us, and we see, nearer and more near, the grand development verging towards the shades of dark and tragic night.* While the destinies of such men, and of mighty nations, hang trembling in the balance, the spectator cares little for preceding and more trivial events; he feels that men can be interested only in the characters of men, in their observations and actions;—not in those of boys. Nothing, indeed, shows a sounder English taste than the more masculine tone of our modern biography, which now discards from its pages those idle inquiries into the nursery and the school which were formerly dwelt upon with so much complacency.

Were we to believe, however, in the words of our most philosophical of poets, that “the boy’s the father of the man,” we could easily picture to ourselves the early days of a Wellington; and if we take this as a reasonable foundation for our supposition, we “need no ghost to tell us” that singular activity, both of mind and body, excessive ardour of pursuit, and extraordinary determination of manner, were the characteristics of the young Arthur Wellesley. But traits like these are lost sight of in the services of the *man*, to whom England owes so much for the revival of her mili-

* It would be difficult, perhaps, to form any idea of the intense degree of interest and awe that would be felt by one, wholly a stranger to the histories of Wellington and Napoleon, who could witness such a drama, or read such a history, for the first time.

tary greatness—for that high respect in the eyes of other nations, so favourable to continued peace, and to national prosperity and independence.

The family of Cowley* (English in descent) is known to have resided, many centuries past, in the county of Rutland. Two brothers, Walter and Robert, having obtained royal grants, established themselves in Ireland. Both had been brought up to the bar, and, in the reign of Henry VIII., the younger became Master of the Rolls, and the elder was appointed solicitor-general, and, in 1548, raised to the office of surveyor-general of the entire kingdom.

The eldest son of Walter was Sir Henry Colley, who embraced, like his distinguished descendant, the profession of arms. In the reign of Elizabeth he was authorized to proclaim and execute martial law, throughout the disturbed districts of Ireland. The services which he rendered, led to his being appointed a Commissioner of Array for Kildare; and he was soon afterwards elected one of the representatives of its leading boroughs. He received the honour of knighthood from the lord deputy, Sir Henry Sydney, the father of the great Algernon Sydney; and he was also appointed a member of the privy council. The estimation in which he was held appears from a letter of Sydney to his successor, in which he recommends Sir Henry Cowley as “an active and efficient servant of the queen, and as good a borderer as ever to be found any where.” His singular good fortune, his judgment and fidelity, are also dwelt upon by the lord deputy as the best recommendations he could offer for his further employment; and so great is the resemblance of character, that we could almost suppose he was describing *some* of the qualities of his still more fortunate descendant.

* The name has been also written Cooley and Colley, which last is the modern mode of spelling it in Ireland; but with regard to its English descent there can be no doubt, from many well-authenticated facts. In Glaiston church there is a monument to Walter Colley, and Agnes, his wife. This Walter was lord of the manor in 1407.

It is emphatically added by Sir Henry, that “his namesake was a knight of his own making;” and then follows that irresistible argument addressed to the self-love of men in power; while it displays a trait not a little honourable to the character of the family; “he was a sound and a fast friend to me, and so, I doubt not, your lordship shall find, when you have occasion to employ him.”

This able borderer and privy councillor, it appears, had three sons by his lady, Catherine, daughter of Sir Thomas Cusack, of Cussington, Lord Chancellor of Ireland. The second of these, Sir Henry, of Castle Carbery, was the immediate ancestor of the present line. Emulating his father’s example he rose to still higher preferments; was made *prove-dore* of the army—an office similar to that of commissary general. Desirous of preserving the peace of the country by civil means, he invited the leading representatives to attend him at Philipstown, to enter into engagements to promote the public tranquillity, to become surety for each other’s conduct,—and to pledge themselves to denounce “any one among them” who should infringe the new regulations. He fulfilled his military duties till the year 1599; attended parliament; married Anne, daughter of Adam Loftus,* Archbishop of Dublin, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Henry; whose successor, H. Dudley Colley, also adopted the profession of arms. He embraced the cause of Charles II., who, on his restoration, presented him with a new grant of lands; and left a numerous family, of whom Henry succeeded to his title; and Elizabeth was married to Garret Wesley, of Dangan, in the county of Meath; who traced his descent to a family of Saxon origin, long settled in the county of Sussex. Henry, by his marriage with Mary, a daughter of Sir William Usher, left a large

* One of the ancestors of the fashionable Lucy Loftus, second wife of Thomas, Marquis of Wharton; a lady notorious for her gallantries. Swift, in his character of the Marquis, gives some curious anecdotes which will not bear repeating.

family, of whom the youngest, Richard, adopted the name of Wellesley upon succeeding to the estates of his first cousin, Garret of Dangan, when he assumed the arms of that family. He appears to have been still more active than his predecessors, having obtained the offices of Auditor and Registrar of the Royal Hospital of Kilmainham, Chamberlain of the Court of Exchequer, Sheriff of the county of Meath, in 1734, and member of Parliament for the family borough of Trim. As some reward for his services, he was created a peer of Ireland, by George II., in 1747, by the title of Baron of Mornington. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Garret, who became Viscount Wellesley and Earl of Mornington ; and married Anne, eldest daughter of the Right Hon. Arthur Hill, Viscount Dungannon, by whom he had a numerous offspring.*

By the early death of the earl, their father, while most of them were of tender years, an anxious and responsible charge devolved upon Lady Mornington, but one to which she showed herself fully equal. The prudence, vigilance, and decision of character which she displayed, with her wise and judicious regulations, went far to supply the loss which they had sustained. By a system of strict, yet liberal economy, she did much to repair the deficiencies of fortune, whilst her intelligent mind suggested the best means of bestowing upon her children an education adapted to their future prospects. Nor was it long before she reaped the reward which she so well deserved. In her eldest, even while young, she found an affectionate son and an intelligent counsellor.

It was he, who by his self-denying and generous conduct in confirming her authority, submitting to her direction, and

- * 1. Richard, second Earl of Mornington, created Marquis Wellesley.
- 2. Arthur Gerald, who died in 1768. 3. William Wellesley Pole, Baron Maryborough. 4. Arthur, created Duke of Wellington. 5. Gerald Valerian, D.D., and a Prebendary of Durham. 6. Henry, created Baron Cowley. 7. Anne, married first to the Honourable Henry Fitzroy, and, secondly, to Culling Charles Smith, Esq. 8. Mary Elizabeth, who died unmarried. 9. Francis Seymour, who died in his fourth year, on the 10th of March, 1770.

assisting in the management of the estates, enabled her to bestow important advantages upon other members of the family. With equal magnanimity he anticipated her wishes, by gradually cancelling the whole of the obligations incurred by his father; a trait that redounds more highly to his honour, than the acquisition of the proudest worldly titles.

The Hon. Arthur Wellesley, son of the Earl of Mornington, was born at Dangan Castle on the first day of May, 1769. After a brief period of domestic tuition under the eye of an accomplished and intelligent mother—an advantage to which so many distinguished characters owe their best moral impressions—he received the benefit of a public education at Eton. But having early directed his views towards the military profession, he was removed, about the close of the American war, to the school at Angers; at that time under the direction of Pignerol, who enjoyed the reputation of being the most celebrated engineer of his day.

The advantages here afforded the young Englishman of studying the profession of his choice, were not a few, and we may conclude that he availed himself of them to their full extent. Angers was then a flourishing town; its university and academy were resorted to by the students of different nations; and what he thus early saw of foreign characters and manners must have tended both to amuse and to expand his mind. It gave him, moreover, that ease and polish which, united with his naturally frank and cheerful bearing, made his society extremely agreeable, besides furnishing him with those general ideas and that sort of information so useful in preparing him for public life, and a more extended intercourse with the world.

Soon after his return to England, the student of Angers obtained his first commission as ensign in the 73d regiment of foot, on the 7th of March, 1787, when in his eighteenth year. During the remaining period of peace, he was allowed sufficient leisure to enlarge his scientific knowledge, and to apply what was necessary to garrison and regimental practice.

In the performance of these duties his conduct, we are assured upon the best authority,* was exemplary; and he was always punctual and exact. He allotted a portion of his time to the perusal of the best writers upon military art; thus early laying in a store of ideas for future reflection and observation, when circumstances should call for the application of his theoretic acquirements. His rank and connexions in life, also, by raising him above mean and sordid cares, enabled him to command greater freedom of thought and equanimity of mind,—teaching him to look with confidence to the future, and inspiring him, perhaps, with something of that faith in fortune which gave fresh energy to the daring eloquence and denunciations of Tully, and which is said to have shone in the looks of Caesar.

It gave him, besides, that gentlemanly and resolute air of independence, which even then distinguished his tone of voice, his language, his earliest letters, and appeared in his whole demeanour. We shall endeavour to keep in view, and to illustrate this peculiar consistency of his character throughout the whole of his adventurous and trying career. Even at the risk of being thought tedious, we shall feel it our duty to describe very fully and particularly both the leading qualities, and the minutest lights and shades of his extraordinary character, and the no less extraordinary circumstances in which he was placed,—of which not the least strange perhaps was, that he closed his brilliant and rapid conquests when only in his forty-sixth year.

Ensign Wellesley received his promotion to a lieutenancy in the 79th infantry on the 25th of December, 1787. Two years following, he passed from the infantry into the cavalry service, accepting a commission in the 12th light dragoons, in

* In addition to the general testimony of preceding biographers upon this point, the writer received that of several officers of rank, and of some old campaigners of the Duke, whom he accidentally met years ago; and who, in assuring him of the same thing, emphatically added that the Duke was always the same man.

which he coninued till the 30th of June, 1791, when he was appointed captain in the 58th, or Rutlandshire regiment of foot. He again entered the cavalry in the subsequent year, by exchanging into the 18th light dragoons, and thus both as a subaltern and a captain, he became familiar with the field duties of both these arms.

Early in the year 1793 Captain Wellesley was promoted to the majority of the 33d regiment, and on the 30th of September of the same year he obtained, by purchase, the lieutenant-colonelcy of that corps, in the room, we believe, of Lieutenant-colonel Yorke. In the command of an excellent regiment, and having scarcely yet reached his twenty-fourth year, Lieutenant-colonel Wellesley was naturally eager for active service. The opportunity soon presented itself. In consequence of the reverses sustained by the allies in the Low Countries, reinforcements were urgently called for, and in May, 1794, the 33d regiment sailed from the cove of Cork, and in the latter end of the following month, was landed at Ostend, on its way to join the army under his Royal Highness the Duke of York. Hardly, however, had its young colonel, placed it in garrison, when Lord Moira arrived at the head of the troops originally intended to operate a diversion in Brittany; and the sudden approach of the French, under General Pichegru, rendered it necessary to evacuate the city. No time was to be lost; the 33d regiment, with two other battalions, was sent round by the Scheldt to Antwerp, (July 1st,) where on its arrival it was encamped during that month; while Lord Moira, with eight thousand men, marched to the relief of his royal highness, by Bruges and Malle towards Ghent.

It would be useless at this time to enter into a discussion of the policy of joining, with our land forces, in the general European league against republican France. The allied powers which had successfully opposed her armies, under the old regime, little calculated upon the extent of that wild impulse and desperation, produced less by enthusiasm than

by terror, but which infused new vigour into her banded legions, and, as in all periods of revolutionary excitement, gave birth to leaders of astonishing energy and talent. They soon vanquished veteran armies, commanded by generals trained in the old school, and boasting names like those of Eugene, Marlborough, and the great Frederick. Yet such was the enemy whom England had now challenged in her fiercest path of conquest, and whom she finally vanquished in the field. But it was morally impossible she should be successful in the outset, considering the very inadequate forces which she had to employ, how shamefully she was betrayed by Prussia, and how ill supported by her other allies.—We shall take a brief retrospect of these events.

When Lieutenant-colonel Wellesley, before Antwerp, first beheld an army in the field, the aspect of affairs was dark and lowering. France was heaving with the shocks of a political earthquake, felt to the remotest corners of Europe, and which filled the old-established dynasties with dismay. All efforts to stem the revolutionary torrent had but increased its rage ; sounds only of disaster were heard, and disciplined troops of the most potent monarchies, were seen flying before mere boys, at the head of infuriated hordes. Yet, the antagonist spirit, awakened by the revolution, was almost equally desperate and terrific ; it seemed to feel that man was taking vengeance for thousand centuries of bitter slavery ; and the very foundations of social order trembled with the shock of the battle. The most ardent friends of liberty, of constitutional government, and of arbitrary sway, alike stood aghast,—struck with awe at the startling and terrific character of passing events. It was in the midst of such times —in so severe a school of adversity, that the conqueror of Waterloo received his earliest impressions of the practical art of war, and attracted that notice, which, by exciting emulation, gives a fresh spur to the soldier's ambition.

The first coalition against France was, in the outset, pre-eminently fortunate, and the old European governments

appeared confident of success. At the close of the campaign of 1793, the allies claimed the superiority, but the enemy were as eager as before for the renewal of the contest. The Duke of York returned to the continent, where he expected to be reinforced by an army of sixty-two thousand Prussians, subsidized by Great Britain. (March 5th.) He proceeded to Valenciennes, held a council of war with the Prince of Coburg and General Clairfait; and, on the appearance of the enemy in West Flanders, advanced, and established his head-quarters at St. Amand.* (25th) The actions in which the British subsequently engaged, were honourable to their bravery, although not always crowned with success. The Austrian posts were carried by the enemy, (29th,) a Hanoverian picket of 140 men was cut off; (April 2d;) and the duke, on learning that the Emperor had arrived at Brussels to take the command, (9th,) removed his head-quarters to Famars.†

The Austrian and British armies passed the Selles, (16th,) and encamped in front of Cateau, leaving the Dutch immediately in its rear; and upon the ensuing morning advanced in eight columns against the village of Catillon. It was carried; and the allies crossing the Sambre, took up a position at Favril, so as to invest Landrecy. At Mazinquer, the enemy's intrenchments were also forced, and they abandoned the whole forest of Nouvion. The third column, commanded by the emperor in person, with the Prince of Coburg, carried the heights of the Grand and Petite Blocus, and pushed forward as far as Genappes.

Meanwhile the fourth and fifth columns, led by the Duke of York, with Sir William Erskine, were unable, from the defiles and ravines, to arrive at the point of attack until one o'clock, when their advanced guard was received with a severe cannonade. Finding the enemy's position too strong

* Historical Journal. Despatches of the Duke of York.

† It was here that the Duke of York executed two soldiers, taken in the act of marauding, and who had murdered a woman in cold blood. On this occasion he issued a noble and spirited manifesto to his army.

in front, the Duke of York determined to turn it by their right; and moving forward the whole column, under cover of the high ground, directed Major-general Abercromby to support the attack. (April 17th.) The redoubt above the village of Vaux was carried by storm, as well as the wood and all the works which the enemy had raised for its defence.

Sir William Erskine was equally successful with his column, supported by the Austrian and British artillery, under the command of Lieutenant-colonel Congreve, driving the French from their redoubts, and capturing some pieces of cannon, and a pair of colours. At the same time, the Prince of Orange advanced towards Cambray, (18th,) and his advanced posts were attacked in front of St. Hilaire, where the enemy was also repulsed with loss.

The siege of Landrecy was immediately commenced; the emperor, with the grand army, covered the operations on the side of Guise, and the Duke of York on that of Cambray. Two standards and nine pieces of cannon bore witness to the gallantry of the English; and their commander published (Cateau, April 19th) an address of thanks, in which he extolled their conduct, and spoke of Generals Sir William Erskine, and Abercromby, and Captain Clinton, in the highest terms.*

21st. The English army again defeated the enemy at Blocus, and saved the Prince of Coburg, when on the point of being put to a complete rout. The French now concentrated their forces in (24th) the vicinity of Cambray, with the view of driving the allies from West Flanders. They attacked them in great force, when the Duke of York had again the honour of rescuing the corps of general Otto from destruction, and the enemy was eventually driven with confusion into Cambray.†

26th.—The siege of Landrecy was now vigorously pressed; and to save it, the French made a fierce and simultaneous attack on the positions of the allies, but were again as gal-

* British Campaign on the Continent. By Captain L. T. Jones.

† Historical Journal of the Campaign. Despatches of the Duke of York.

lantly repulsed by the British, especially by the cavalry, with the loss of twenty-two pieces of cannon. Upon no occasion were the strength and superiority of the British cavalry more decidedly displayed.

The enemy's attack extended along the whole frontier from Treves to the sea, and it failed at every point; they lost a general, three thousand killed, and thirty-five pieces of cannon.* Their commander had again occasion to congratulate the army on its successes; and Captain Murray, the bearer of the tidings home, received instant promotion.

29th.—Had General Clairfait sustained the attack of Pichegru with the same valour and resolution; and had the supreme command been vested in a general instead of an emperor, the results of this campaign might have been very different; and it is only just to the character of the Duke of York, to observe that with regard to his allies, he found himself placed in a very critical and responsible situation. Courtray and Menin fell, and the safety of the British army was compromised by the losses of its allies.

May 4th. Despatch of the Duke of York.—Landrecy, indeed, surrendered, but the English were attacked near Tournay by a force amounting to thirty thousand men. In this well-sustained action, the Duke of York displayed considerable ability, by directing a cavalry attack upon the enemy's right flank, which proved perfectly successful; and although the French fought with desperation, they were repulsed in every attempt, with the loss of three thousand five hundred men, and thirteen pieces of cannon. (May 10th, Despatch, &c.) What rendered it the more honourable was the inferior force of the British, besides the disadvantages under which they engaged; and public thanks were returned to Lieutenant-general Harcourt, to Major-general Dundas, and to Sir Robert Lawrie, as well as to all the officers and soldiers, whose gallantry was never surpassed.

* Despatch of the Duke. Journal, &c.

16th.—Encouraged by this success, the emperor determined to make a general attack, and compel the enemy to evacuate the whole of West Flanders. The combined army moved forward in five columns, two of which were directed to force the passage of Marque, and attacking the enemy's posts, to cover the operations of the three which were destined to force the enemy's positions by Robaix, Waterloo, and Moucron, so as to favour Clairfait's passage of the Lys, and cut off the communication between Lisle and Courtray. In this attack the imperialists failed, and retreated to their former position at Warcoign; but General Otto, with his column, advanced through Leers to Waterloo, from which he drove the enemy, and reached Turcoing.

17th.—The British general, meantime, with seven battalions of British, five of Austrians, and two of Hessians, marched upon Lannoy, from which he drove the enemy on the morning of the 17th, and pushing on to Robaix, again attacked and compelled the enemy to retreat, with loss, upon Moucron.* Lieutenant-general Abercromby occupied Robaix, and the Duke of York, with the remainder of his army, took up a position upon the heights behind Lannoy. With a view of co-operating with the Austrians, and relieving General Clairfait, he next directed General Abercromby to proceed to the attack of Mouveaux. The enemy's positions were carried by storm; they were pursued as far as Bouderes; and the communications with the Austrians, and with General Otto, who held possession of Turcoing, were reopened.

18th.—The ensuing morning the enemy again attacked; forced the positions of Otto, near Waterloo, while another force, at the same time, advanced upon his rear. The duke, weakened by the detachments sent to support Otto, was unable to sustain the contest with overwhelming numbers, and

* Despatches of the Duke of York, May 19th and 23d, 1794. Historical Journal of the Campaign, 9.

being completely surrounded, and unable to retreat, was compelled to force his way, with the 16th light dragoons, to join Otto, and concert measures for the safety of the army.

Abercromby, at the same time, still more compromised by the loss of all General Otto's positions ; surrounded, and his retreat cut off, adopted the bold resolution of pressing his march upon Lannoy, which he effected, notwithstanding the desperate and repeated attacks of the enemy. He found Lannoy already occupied in force, and with great difficulty was enabled to reach Templeuve.

19th. A small force, under Major-general Fox, encountered even more serious difficulties ; with a mere handful of men he charged several battalions of the enemy, who had summoned and expected him to surrender ; gained his point ; secured his retreat towards Leers, and the next morning rejoined Otto ; a brilliant affair, which excited the astonishment of both armies.*

But it was a lost campaign ; the defeat of Otto at Waterloo rendered the situation of the allies almost desperate. At the same time, the imperial manifestos did ample justice to the chivalrous bravery of the British ; and especially the horse, which made them the terror of their enemies.

May 22d.—Following up their successes, the French attacked the right wing of the allies with one hundred thousand men, directed to force the passage of the Scheldt and to invest Tournay. The battle commenced at five in the morning, and was maintained till nine at night ; fresh troops were continually brought up, and the centre of the allies was also vigorously attacked. About three o'clock their right wing began to give way, when the Duke of York detached seven Austrian battalions from his left, and the second brigade of British infantry, which stormed the village of Pontochin, and rushing with fixed bayonets upon the enemy, turned the fate of the day. The French retreated

* Despatches of the Duke of York.

during the night, leaving twelve thousand dead upon the field, besides the loss of prisoners and cannon. It is a memorable fact, that on that day, a single British brigade restored the battle; for had it not come up and fought with signal gallantry, the allies must have been completely routed. But the able dispositions of Pichegru snatched the results of this hard-won victory out of the hands of the allied leaders.

24th.—The British general continued to strengthen his position before Tournay, while the greater part of the allies fell back so as to cover Brussels and Ghent; the Prince of Ceburg joined them, and the English were left with an inadequate force in front of the enemy. (Head-quarters, Tournay, June 7.) At this time, the sanguinary decree of the National Convention, to make no prisoners, called forth an indignant and spirited proclamation by the British commander; which powerfully appealing to their sentiments of honour, conjured his soldiers not to retaliate; but to give quarter to their prisoners.

17th.—General Clairfait now attempted to relieve Ypres, but was repulsed in a series of severe conflicts, and the fortress surrendered. The 8th regiment of British dragoons, the 38th and 55th regiments of foot, at the same time received public thanks from the imperialists for the distinguished services which they had rendered.

The subsequent defeat of the Austrians, and the retreat of Walmoden, compelled the Duke of York to abandon his position: (24th:) and with a view also of covering Oudenard, he marched to Renaix. The Prince of Ceburg, also, with the hope of retrieving affairs, made a general attack upon the enemy's lines, but was defeated at every point, and pursued to Halle. (26th.) Brussels was thus left to its fate; Charleroi had fallen; and the allies who had opened the campaign with one hundred and ninety thousand men, were now in full retreat from the Netherlands before the republican armies, which nearly tripled their numbers. It

was at this moment, that Lord Moira by his able movements, and sudden and happy stratagem,* (30th,) which threw the enemy off their guard, succeeded in joining Walmoden, and effecting a diversion in favour of the Duke of York. (Despatches of Lord Moira, Malle.)

During the extreme darkness of the night, in the midst of torrents of rain, and one of the most terrific thunder-storms—resembling that upon the eve of Waterloo—ever heard, a brigade under Lord Cathcart was conducted by mistake or treachery into the French lines, and every man would have been taken, had it not been for the admirable presence of mind, and a perfect knowledge of the language possessed by

* Major-general Doyle, then quartermaster-general, went to the burgomaster of Bruges to obtain refreshments during the march. Doyle, finding him extremely inquisitive as to the numbers, and suspecting him of communicating with the enemy, told him that he would have to supply ONLY 15,000 THEN; but that he must be prepared for another arrival of the same number before six o'clock that evening, for that the troops were at that moment disembarking at Ostend. This information went immediately to Vandamme, who, relying upon the burgomaster's authority, observed that he was a very clever fellow for pumping the Englishman; and instead of attacking Lord Moira's little force, which he might almost have eaten up, he got out of the way with all possible expedition, and by this movement enabled Colonel Vyse, with two regiments of infantry to get away a quantity of stores and to complete the evacuation of Ostend.

Upon the morning of the 30th, a singular incident that might have been attended with still more unpleasant consequences, occurred in the British lines. A sentinel belonging to a picket, having challenged, and received no reply, fired at the spot where he heard some noise, and wounded an unfortunate ass, which immediately set up its discordant pipes. The picket hearing the sentinel fire, took the alarm, and being informed that the enemy's horse were advancing, also began to fire. Some of the regiment then instantly turning out, followed their example by firing in the same direction, and unfortunately they killed one of their own picket and wounded two others. It was the cause, likewise, of the army marching three hours earlier than they would otherwise have done, as they were obliged on that day to march double the distance they had originally intended; it being necessary for the safety of the entire army, that Walmoden as well as Lord Moira, should arrive at Ostakar that night, so as to be ready to form a junction with the Austrians under Clairfait.

their commander, who extricated himself with slight loss from the dilemma.

July 2d.—Reverses now followed fast; the Prince of Coburg was defeated at Mons; again at Soigniers; and the Duke of York pursued his retreat to Grammont, (3d,) sending forward his sick to Antwerp. Tournay and Ghent were now occupied by the enemy, (6th,) who were at this time twenty miles nearer to Antwerp than the British general. He therefore hurried his retreat to Asche, reached Malines, where he was joined by Lord Moira, crossed the Neethe, (9th,) and encamped at Konticq, while Lord Moira took a position at Waerloos. But they were not permitted the short respite from continual toil and battle, which the troops so much required. They formed the rear guard of the allies; and were repeatedly attacked by the enemy with very superior numbers. (12th and 13th.) Constant skirmishes, and brilliant affairs with the cavalry, were the order of the day. The dragoons, headed by Colonel Churchill, overthrew a superior body of the enemy (15th), and the French colonel fell, gallantly fighting with the Englishmen hand to hand.

16th.—The attacks of the next day were repulsed with equal gallantry, and the skill and intrepidity of Lieutenant-general Abercromby, who succeeded to the command of Lord Moira, were the theme of every tongue. (22d.) The retreat was continued on Bergen-op-Zoom; the stores of Antwerp were destroyed, and it was not till (24th) they reached the plains near Rosendale that the army, worn out with incessant attacks, were enabled to enjoy a brief repose. The enemy were pushing to gain the plains of Breda before them; and the army resumed its march. (August 4th.) There it took up so formidable a position, that the French general declined to disturb it; and the Dutch had sufficient time to put the garrison in defence. It was near Breda that those frequent skirmishes occurred in which the light dragoons so much distinguished themselves, and captured a picket of the enemy.

In most of these affairs, and during part of the retreat from Antwerp, Lieutenant-colonel Wellesley was present with his regiment, and, in protecting the retreat, had the advantage in some sharp skirmishes with the enemy.

28th.—The enemy now attacked in formidable numbers, attempted to turn the British left, and to cut off their retreat on Bois le Duc. This was prevented only by great promptness and resolution, and without the loss of a single man. (30th.) Such was the expedition, that the army encamped within four miles of Bois le Duc, upon the same ground which had been occupied in the year 1746. Had it remained another day upon the plains of Breda, the French, with one hundred thousand men, would inevitably have surrounded and destroyed it, having received strong reinforcements.

1st September.—The head-quarters were removed to Berlicom, where the army again breathed, freed from fresh attacks till the 14th, when the outposts along the Dommel, and at Boxtel, were forced with considerable loss. Here the spirit and judgment of Lieutenant-colonel Wellesley, who checked the advance of the enemy and restored order, were brought into active display. But, pursued by an overwhelming force under Pichegru, the army continued its retreat, arrived near the old lines of Velpen, about three miles from Grave, and the next day crossed the Meuse.

1st October.—Meantime the Austrians had been driven across the Rhine with tremendous loss; and fresh troops were pouring down upon the devoted English. Forced marches were renewed, (3d,) and the army at length were enabled to take up a position near Nimeguen. (17th.) Many severe conflicts were now renewed, in which the 33d, being the covering party, and forming part of a brigade, commanded by Lieutenant-colonel Wellesley, bore a conspicuous share. In some spirited actions upon the Waal, also, in which Major Hope performed several brilliant feats, the covering force, under the Colonel's immediate direction, proved extremely useful in checking the temerity of the

enemy's incessant attacks. With an address little honourable to them, the French formed corps equipped in the exact uniform of the emigrants, and of the Rhoan hussars, by means of which they often surprised, and cut off both officers and detachments, and it required every man to be on the alert to avoid the deceitful snare.

27th and 28th.—In some affairs of outposts, and the attack on Fort St. André, before Nimeguen, Lieutenant-general Abercromby, Sir William Clarke, and Captain Picton, performed wonders against very superior numbers, and were all wounded. A powerful sortie from Nimeguen, (November 4th,) supported by the British at this time, was crowned with perfect success; but the loss on both sides was severe, and it failed to check the enemy's progress. It was with difficulty that the garrison were drawn off, (6th and 7th,) the Dutch were made prisoners, and the army, thinned by sickness and suffering every kind of privation, went into cantonments along the Waal. (9th.) The season was extremely inclement; the mortality continued to spread; (14th;) a contagious fever, fierce as the plague, burst forth in both armies, and the hospitals were filled. Still the enemy continued their attempts upon Bommel, but invariably without effect.

December 6th.—Early in December the Duke of York quitted the army and returned to England, leaving the command to General Walmoden, as senior officer.

14th.—At this time, owing to the severity of the season, the ice upon the Waal was so strong, that regiments of cavalry, with the heaviest cannon, could cross without the least fear of its giving way. The English had erected batteries on the Waal dyke, notwithstanding which the enemy crossed near the Tuyl, and took possession of the port of Tiel. (27th.) It was retaken, however, in the most gallant style in a general attack, where the batteries at the town of Bommel were also carried; and with this gallant action the campaign of 1794 may be said to have closed.

Jan. 1, 1795.—Upon the opening of the year, there was, technically speaking, a daily alert along the lines; indeed, the whole of the army below the Waal and Lech had the appearance of one picket. Tuyl, however, was again lost; and General Dundas, when about to assume the offensive, was himself attacked at Geldermalsen, (5th,) the village of which was carried by the 33d regiment, and the brigade commanded by Lieutenant-colonel Wellesley. The enemy advanced against the village, both in front and flank, but were repulsed by the steadiness of the brigade and the troops in reserve, and driven upon Metteren with the loss of some hundreds.*

6th.—General Dundas now fell back upon Bueren, and in some severe skirmishes which ensued, to the advantage of the British, Lieutenant-colonel Paget, who highly distinguished himself, was wounded, with sixty-five men. (Jan. 8th.) Every officer in the 27th regiment was hit; but not one who was only slightly wounded quitted his post. The attack was conducted by Lord Cathcart.

14th.—The enemy, now greatly reinforced, attacked the whole line from Arnheim to Amerongen; and upon the same night, the army began their retreat towards Amersford and Deventer. From this period the sufferings of the soldiers became extreme, and many afflicting scenes, and deeds, and outrages, revolting to humanity displayed war in its most terrific forms. In retaliation for casual excesses committed by the soldiers, the inhabitants not only closed their hearts and their doors against the unfortunate, the lost, or the sick, but are said to have rifled and not unfrequently despatched them.

19th.—The banks of the Yssel were at length gained; and the army, for the moment, went into cantonments along the Ems (27th.) (February 10th.)—During the succeeding days

* See despatches by General Walmoden, General William Harcourt, and General Dundas. The government bulletins.

the enemy having prepared to renew the pursuit, General Abercromby, and other able leaders, continued to retire; (11th;) but the emigrants suffered severe loss; (26th;) and the French pressing on, attacked Lord Cathcart's brigade, which was compelled, in some confusion, to fall back. At this time, when all the corps were in full retreat, (March 5th,) the Prussians, forty thousand strong—and bound to have made their appearance long before—entered Westphalia to protect their own frontiers, (16th,) while the British army marched to Bremen, (April 14th,) from whence they proceeded to Bremerleche, where they embarked for England, with the exception of General Dundas and Lord Cathcart, with a detachment of artillery and all the British cavalry, who remained some time in the same position. Such was the close of a campaign in which the army, under circumstances of great difficulty, conducted itself with uniform steadiness and gallantry, and in which the enemy mainly owed their success to the ability of their leaders and their very superior numbers.

The foregoing sketch will enable the reader to form some idea of the kind of warfare in which Lieutenant-colonel Wellesley was first engaged; and it is a remarkable fact that, although only present during part of this disastrous retreat, he was placed in the post of honour, and acquitted himself with judgment and spirit. Always on the alert, in the midst of incessant peril and alarm, he learned to unite coolness and caution with that happy daring so signally developed in his future campaigns. To discharge his duty, and to serve his country to the best of his ability, under every difficulty and in every emergency, was the animating principle which guided his conduct; and from that moment the eye of fortune was upon him; he persevered in it with unshrinking fortitude, and it became the talisman of his success. Without that principle, talent, rank, promotion—even the gigantic errors committed by Napoleon himself—could never have raised Wellington to the pinnacle of fame upon which he now stands. For never—like the fortunate Greek, who refused longer to acknowledge the power of Fortune, or in other words, of Providence, over his actions

—did he expose himself by overweening confidence to a change of destiny ; but still, after having made every effort depending upon himself, he sacrificed to the arbitress of battles, and calmly awaited the event. In plain terms, he did his duty, and felt that there was a Power above him “ who shaped his ends, rough hew them as he would;” he never abused the gifts of fortune, was never ungrateful even when she frowned ; and she adopted him for her favourite son.

Besides the stern lessons of an adverse campaign, there were other advantages which he failed not to reap from it. He saw how much depended upon personal conduct and mental resources, no less than vigour and promptitude, in a commander-in-chief. He witnessed the evils of distracted councils in war ; how much talent and courage are paralyzed, without confidence in one head and unity of design. He saw faults and errors by which he profited ; and thus early acquired those just and sound views relative to the general conduct of war, its real nature, its inevitable sufferings and calamities, which dictated his opinions, and actuated his conduct, in after life.* Hence, too, he may have acquired that moderation and equanimity even in the hour of victory, that love of strict discipline, and of maintaining it by fully providing for the comforts of his troops, which led him to adopt wise and provident measures, instead of having recourse to rapine and plunder. He had witnessed many instances of the licentious conduct of the British troops, not the less to be condemned because it was provoked by the insults of the republican party, and the general disaffection and inhospitality of the Dutch.† No indifferent spectator of what was passing around

* We venture to state, upon the authority of the public press, that when his Grace was asked by Lady ——, whether “ he did not consider a great victory a glorious thing ? ” the NOBLE Duke replied, “ I think that next to a defeat, it is the greatest misfortune which can befall a man.”

† Among other instances left upon record, of the republican spirit of the Dutch, about this period, is the following ; almost too characteristic of a genuine Dutchman, of the old school, not to be true. It shows the extreme severity with which political acts were visited by the opposite parties ; when the battle of principles became one of fierce and deadly hate, and neither the voice of

him, he saw the want of method and order which pervaded the British army, especially in the medical and commissariat departments, producing evils which fall heaviest in seasons of difficulty and privation. So great was the negligence shown in their administration, that corruption and rapacity were the order of the day. The regulations, when made, were never carried into proper effect; and it was impossible for one who so well discharged his own duties, and so early displayed a firm regard for the interest and honour of his country, to behold the want of system and economy, and the abuses which notoriously prevailed in so many departments, without indignation and regret.

It is proper at the same time to observe, that this corrupt system prevailed more extensively *after* the retirement of the commander-in-chief. Can we feel surprised that with such causes of demoralization, acting upon the temperament of British soldiers, during a harassing and perilous retreat, they should lose their subordination and give loose to excesses which exasperated the feelings of the inhabitants?

The policy, moreover, of some of the allies, rendered their motives justly liable to suspicion. The occupation of Poland by Prussia, was of itself sufficient to affect the credit of the general league against France; especially in the Low Countries, where the stream of popular feeling ran more in favour of new French ideas than the established constitutions of the English and the Germans. From the first, the natives viewed the alliance with alarm; and subsequently, upon witnessing the unsuccessful progress of the war, and smarting under its effects, with hostility and abhorrence. Less than this could not be ex-

reason, nor of mercy, could be heard.—One of the Dutch patriots of the day was surprised in the act of carrying an address, signed by more than 3000 of the inhabitants of Amsterdam, to the French head-quarters; declaring that they were ready to deliver up the city. In passing through the British camp, he was seized just as he had concluded a bargain with a boatman to pass the river. Forty guineas was the fare required, and while engaged, in the old Dutch style, in trying to make easier terms, he lost the happy moment, and paid for his frugality with his life.

pected from their natural aversion to beholding their country made the arena of fierce and desolating contests ; subjected to the passions of a baffled army, during a rapid retreat, when injuries are inflicted upon an ally, far exceeding those upon the enemy.

Taking an impartial view, therefore, and weighing the recriminations on both sides—which were bitter enough at that period—all that can be said is, that the war in the Low Countries was as ill-advised as it was unfortunate. The only means by which to repel the French was, to have roused a love of country, as was subsequently done in Spain, and a respect for national independence ; in short, to have given the Dutch something for which to fight. Without these powerful incentives, no people, whether the citizens of towns, or the industrious tenants of fields and hamlets, can patiently contemplate the disturbance, the peril, the destruction of property, and all the ills that war is heir to ; without execrating the presence of contending armies. Besides, neither the people of Flanders nor of Holland conceived themselves essentially interested in the result of the war. Their sole wish was to avoid coming into collision with either power, and to remain quiet if they could. Unless there is something extremely valuable at stake, the greatest happiness of most people is to be permitted to pursue their avocations, without interference or molestation ; to perform the tasks of life allotted to them, and to sleep in peace. Events and circumstances are the real masters of men's opinions, and of their actions ; and the same people who shouted for an Austrian emperor the year before, now prepared to fraternize with the republicans of France, and to drag their old prejudices in triumph, at the chariot-wheels of the victors of Fleurus and Jemappes. A feeling also, of national jealousy, founded upon the old commercial grievances, influenced the conduct of the Dutch ; and if, in evacuating Holland, the English army was pervaded by one sentiment of unalloyed pleasure, the people whom they left, participated in it to its fullest extent.

Although attended by no good result, the campaign, as we

have shown, was not dishonourable to the British arms. The opinion so long prevalent throughout Europe, that England, however formidable on the ocean, had become inefficient in an arm no less essential for the assertion of national dignity and independence, was considerably modified. It had been proved, that she could maintain an army in the field, that her soldiers had not lost the military qualities necessary to form armies such as had been led to conquest under the third William and the Duke of Marlborough; and that on every fair occasion, during the unhappy struggle, they had never shrunk from performing their duty in the face of a superior foe.

However unimportant in itself, it should never be forgotten that this war had a still more powerful influence on the gigantic struggle for the subjugation of Europe. It afforded the practical school in which a Wellington was first trained, and although few victories marked its progress, it was calculated, by the very difficulties and privations with which it was attended, to supply that sort of experience and those lessons in the details of defensive warfare, more useful, doubtless, to a young soldier, than the triumphs of a brilliant campaign. It showed the value of coolness and caution in the hour of danger, of promptitude and decision in action, of strict duty and self-denial upon every occasion. In the rapid marches and bold attacks of a superior foe, continually exposed to hard service in repelling them, and covering the retreat, he at once saw war on a grand scale; developing the various resources, the comparative abilities, and counter-maneuvres of no despicable commanders. Besides, the army in which he served, consisting of sixty-eight battalions and eighty squadrons, he had the advantage of observing the allied troops of different nations, their mode of discipline, their various habits, and their conduct. He had become familiarized to the mighty sounds of war—destined soon to peal yet louder on his ear; he had heard the inspiring cheer of the British soldier, and felt that confidence in his nerve and vigour which, in his future fields, taught him to rely on their power, in those great

and daring actions, which his skilful combinations crowned with success.

But while admiring the bravery, he was not insensible to the faults of the English character, and the strictures made upon the discipline, the interior economy, and arrangements of the English army by the allies were put to future good account. He saw the want of revision in the entire system of regimental economy; the glaring defects of most of our military institutions; and especially as regarded the officers of the general staff. These deficiencies being shown, the Duke of York, perceiving the advantages of the preparatory system, and of the discipline enforced by men like Moore, Dundas, and Abercromby, exerted himself with laudable zeal to supply them. The war in Flanders, considered only in this point of view, was not without its utility, and led to the detection of military faults and errors, the removal of which mainly assisted a Wellington in his application of the principles of sound military reform in a manner so practical, and on a scale so extensive, as to ensure the strength and efficiency of the English army. To effect this, required no common degree of energy and resolution; so arduous a task could only have been accomplished by a man of great mind. In his character of a superior general, the great Frederick of Prussia seems to describe the qualities we should assign to the subject of the following work; "vigour, promptitude, and a knowledge how to seize the opportunities offered by fortune."

Upon the return of this ill-fated expedition to the British shores, the 33d regiment was disembarked at Harwich, and for a brief period lay encamped at Warley. In the course of the ensuing autumn, it received orders for foreign service and marched to Southampton, where it joined the fleet, prepared to sail under the command of Admiral Christian, and in which Lieutenant-colonel Wellesley embarked for the West Indies. Owing, however, to the heavy gales, it was found impossible to proceed; and, after making repeated attempts to sail, exposed to

the most tempestuous weather at sea during a period of six weeks, the expedition was compelled to return, not without considerable damage, into port. The 33d was subsequently quartered at Poole; and it was not till the spring of 1796, when Lieutenant-colonel Wellesley was promoted to the rank of Colonel, (3d May,) that fresh orders were received for it to embark for India. The Colonel, however, was not able to accompany it out, being at that time confined to his chamber by a severe attack of illness. But he rallied at no distant period, and immediately setting sail, rejoined his corps at the Cape of Good Hope. Proceeding with it thence to Bengal, he reached Calcutta towards the commencement of the year 1797, when a new and wider field of active service first opened upon his view.

It was remarked by one of his fellow-passengers that Colonel Wellesley, although uniformly cheerful and ready to mix in the harmless amusements of his brother officers to dissipate the tedium which HE did not feel,—contrived to spend much time in his own cabin. He was employed in the perusal of the best military works upon India, and acquiring that information which might enable him to discharge the duties upon which he was about to enter with greater credit and satisfaction.

It was also observed, that he had none of the little airs or affectations often displayed by young officers of high connections, who have the prospect of rapid promotion before their eyes. There was a manly simplicity in his demeanour which never forsook him, united to a steadiness and firmness of purpose, clearly evincing that he did not look only to extrinsic advantages for his success in life. Whatever were those advantages, he aimed, from the outset, at higher and better things. He knew that men never become great by mere influence or accident; that they must possess the materials of greatness within themselves, to be rough-hewn, worked out, shaped and finished by laborious thought, long painful study, and

incessant care and watching. That, moreover, after all is done, the result rested not with himself; that he knew not whether he was to reap where he had sown; but of one thing he felt secure; that the most brilliant talent, without fixed and persevering principle, shines only to dazzle and to betray.

CHAPTER II.

(INDIA—THE MYSORE—1797 to 1799.)

Departure of Lord Mornington for India—Arrival at Calcutta—Colonel Wellesley—Expedition from Bengal—Visit to Madras—Views and opinions—Projects of Tippoo Sultan—State of the Carnatic—Landing at Mangalore—Policy of Tippoo—Foiled by the Governor-general—Generous and manly conduct of Lord Mornington—Straightforward conduct—Enlightened views—Wise precautions—Bold measures—Assembles the army of the Mysore—Important command given to Colonel Wellesley—March of the army—Anecdotes—The advance—Skirmishes and attacks—Battle of Malavelly—Forward movements—Affair of posts—Night attack—Siege of Seringapatam—Brilliant attack of Colonel Wellesley—Storm and surrender—Anecdotes—The forlorn hope—Colonel Dunlop—Gallant conduct and death of the Sultan—Tippoo Sultan's sons—Sir David Baird—Colonel Wellesley appointed governor—High principle and judgment—Treasures—New regulations—Removal of the young princes.

THE disinterested conduct of Lord Mornington, already alluded to; his brilliant talents and sound judgment, early pointed him out as one whose qualities were likely to give strength to the ministry. True merit combined with high principle, never stoops to solicit favours; it feels that it ought to command them. Invited to join the administration, he had shown by his extensive information, his ability, and his zeal upon all occasions, how well founded was the opinion entertained of him. As a member of the Board of Control, he had acquired an intimate knowledge of Indian affairs, and so highly were his statesmanlike views appreciated, that although so young in public life, he was offered the important and responsible situation of Governor-general. The result amply justified their choice; and he made his country the best return in his power, by opening a wider field for the abilities of his younger brother.

The Earl of Mornington arrived at Calcutta in the Virginia frigate on the 17th of May, 1798, and lost no time in entering upon the arduous duties of his high office. Before proceeding with a narrative of the events which followed, it will be necessary to take a brief sketch of the state of the country, and of existing parties, so as to enable the reader to appreciate the policy pursued in the subsequent stirring campaign.

The ancient and magnificent empire of India, as vast in extent as it is naturally fertile and luxuriant, extends from the mountains of Thibet and Tartary, to the island of Ceylon, and from the Indus to the Ganges—a space about equal to the half of Europe, and containing a population of nearly one hundred and forty millions. The old appellations by while it was designated, its religion, laws, and strange superstitions, all carry our ideas back into remote antiquity, when it was venerated as “the land of virtues,” and “the glory of sanctity,” while the more modern name of Hindostan given by its invaders, would seem to signify the “country of black people.” The Greeks, under the denomination of India, seem to have comprehended the entire surface of those countries which lie between China and Persia; and it has been applied generally to all the islands reaching as far south as the coast of New Holland.

That vague mystery of traditions—the religion of Hindostan, may be traced further back than any upon record, and many writers have extolled the sublimity and the purity of its doctrines. It is difficult to decide, whether these doctrines were better inculcated, or more generally practised in former ages, than they now are; but when we reflect upon the corruptions by which the whole system is debased, the horrible rites with which it is celebrated, and the idolatrous and savage spirit of its votaries; we feel no desire, however we may admire the beautiful visions of its Vedas, to trace its progress and its consequences, except to expose its follies and profanations. From its stern uncompromising character, such a religion is calculated to flourish wherever it has taken root; for it appeals as strongly to the interests, as the fears of its worshippers; while from its

assumption of sacred principles, none of the usual weapons of conversion can reach it. Reverence for their own laws, and religious ordinances to engrave them on their hearts, soar beyond the grasp of all argument; and from this source, spring the disgusting sacrifices and the wild idolatry so sacred in their eyes. Such is the conviction of their truth, that we rarely find an instance of the Hindoo changing the tenets of his sect, much less the religion of Brahma and of his ancestors; or if it do occur, it is in the person of one of the lowest castes, which, fallen and corrupt as they are, have invariably resisted, as a body, the efforts of the missionaries to enlighten them.

The religious empire of the Hindoo, formed on the established doctrines, is not, however, supreme; it is divided with the Parsees, or worshippers of fire; and Mahomedans are instrumental in the work of innovation and secession, which, with Christian conquests, must uproot castes and idols, with all their superstitions, in the end. It is only where the human intellect has been ennobled by the spirit of divine revelation, that the altars of any religion have ceased to be stained with human blood, and have been fixed on an imperishable foundation.

As regarded the rights of property, the absolute sway over all was usurped by the barbaric sovereigns of these regions "of ancient Ind." It was apportioned by them under feudal tenure, to their followers, one-sixth portion of the lands being retained in perpetual claim of rent. The occupants, nevertheless, were considered freeholders, and heirs in perpetuity; for, however absolute a government, there always appears the name of law; and this was the sole idea of property possessed by the poor Hindoo, either with regard to political or any other liberty. The various attempts at ingrafting British institutions upon the old decayed stock, had not hitherto met with success. The effect had been to develop only some of the meaner features of the Hindoo character—to produce a spirit of avarice, intrigue, and litigiousness, more beneficial to their priests and lawyers than to the people themselves.

It is no less singular a fact, that deeply bigoted as are the people of India, in regard to religion, laws, and customs—each of these so distinct in character,—yet no country has fallen an easier prey to the invader. Their political and social relations were as weak as their religious prejudices were strong and violent. The successive masters who, until the star of England dawned upon the country, governed it with despotic sway, though they deprived its degraded inhabitants of every thing else, were cautious not to interfere with their sacrifices and profanations—a policy which their more enlightened and humane conquerors, with some modifications, found it not less necessary to pursue. Something in extenuation of their passive disposition, and want of all energy and independence, may, indeed, be said, as regards the indefensible character of the country; for though the more northern tribes were bound together by a political league, their language and manners were different, and their confederacies, like those of all weak superstitious people, never produced important or decisive results.

Few men were better acquainted with these weak points in their individual and confederate character, and the causes of their political and internal imbecility, than Colonel Wellesley. He lost no opportunity, also, of acquainting himself with the actual situation of affairs, and availed himself of the expedition despatched from Bengal, in which the 33d was commissioned to serve, conducted by General St. Leger, under the orders of the former governor-general, Sir John Shore,* and destined for the attack of Manilla, to extend his knowledge of the East. Upon reaching Penang, however, where they found a portion of the same expedition, arrived from Madras, already awaiting them, new orders were issued for the return of the different corps to their respective presidencies. This sudden change of plans was said to be owing to the well-grounded fears entertained by Lord Hobart, governor of Fort St. George, respecting

* Afterwards Lord Teignmouth.

the movements of Tippoo Sultan, who, it was apprehended, might seize that opportunity to enter the Carnatic.*

After the return, therefore, of the 33d regiment, in conformity with these orders, Colonel Wellesley took advantage of the leisure thus afforded him, to pay a visit to Lord Hobart at Madras, who was at that period preparing for his return to England. From him, also, he obtained much valuable information, as to the existing relations between the Honourable Company, its allies, and the native princes. Some portion of the two months which he devoted to these inquiries, was advantageously employed, likewise, in examining the different establishments at Madras, and various parts of the Carnatic, and he then returned to Calcutta, to await the arrival of his elder brother, whose appointment to succeed Sir John Shore, had been already announced.†

Previous to the stirring events we are about to describe, the political aspect of India looked less dark and threatening than it had for some time done. The peace and security of our English possessions were not then disturbed. When the Earl of Mornington left England it was the general opinion that he would find the country in a state of profound tranquillity; and this impression was confirmed by the reports which reached him from the authorities at the different presidencies.‡ But the calm was deceitful; the elements of strife and discord were at active work, and it is clear, from the recall of the troops from the expedition to Manilla, that apprehensions were entertained, more particularly upon the side of Tippoo Sultan. His known and rankling enmity, springing from a sense of injury and wounded pride, which is never forgiven, made it evident to discerning eyes, that the struggle commenced with Hyder Ali was not terminated; and, when such causes were operating, and the outbreak of a fresh war so near at hand, it was impossible that

* Despatches from Sir John Shore. Military orders.

† Letters of Lord Hobart. Despatches of the Governor-general.

‡ See Colonel Gurwood. Despatches, i. 3, 4.

the relations of the Company with the neighbouring states should not be threatened, if not actually involved. Although no apprehensions were generally entertained of hostile designs from other quarters, it was prudent to be prepared for events, and the new Governor-general, while devoting his special attention to internal affairs, was not insensible to the difficulties which he should have to encounter in preserving a general peace. To those who looked beyond the surface, never at any period did our colonial affairs appear more complicated, our interests more involved, or our dominion more insecure; calling for statesmanlike council, and vigorous measures, to meet the approaching crisis, and to take advantage of its progress to extend and consolidate British influence and power. We were engaged, it should be remembered, in a war with France and Spain, at a period when the former was actuated by a spirit of aggression, and jealous rivalry, especially of our naval and colonial power, in which her ally fully participated. Both were secretly fanning those embers of discord, destined, ere long, to burst into open flame; while Lord Mornington, on his side, did all that depended upon one man, and the powers of government intrusted to him, to maintain in India an honourable peace. One of his first acts was to write a conciliatory letter to the Sultan of Mysore, remarkable for the caution and judgment which it displays; and the first decision which he made, with regard to the disputed claims, was in favour of the same ruler, after it had received the sanction of a fair award. But nothing could appease Tippoo's ambition, his insatiable thirst of revenge, and his desire of expelling the English from their possessions in India. No unworthy successor of Hyder Ali, and still smarting under the humiliation of successive defeats, followed by a forced peace, in him the French agents found an instrument ready prepared for their purpose. Impatient of the terms dictated by Lord Cornwallis at Seringapatam, and strictly enforced by his successor, he not only encouraged their intrigues, but despatched two emissaries to the Isle of France, who were received publicly, and with marked distinc-

tion, being sumptuously entertained like an accredited embassy. Not satisfied with this, the governor of that island put forth a proclamation, announcing that an embassy had arrived from Tippoo Sultan, bearing proposals to enter into an alliance, offensive and defensive with France, and to subsidize whatever troops that power might choose to place at his disposal; in short, to declare war against British India, for which the Sultan was represented as being fully prepared.

It was added, that Tippoo was then waiting with anxiety to receive from France such assistance as might enable him to undertake his great project of expelling the British from the shores of Hindostan. Proceedings like these would be sufficient, were other facts wanting, to exonerate Lord Mornington from the charge of wishing to engage in a new war. What was the conduct he pursued from the hour of his arrival? In a series of letters which reflect the highest honour both upon his head and his heart, and which display the views of an enlightened and accomplished statesman, he sought to bring over the Sultan to more moderate and politic councils, to make him sensible of his true interests, to point out the advantages of continued peace, to calm his restless ambition, and soften the asperities of his mind. He instantly restored, by proclamation, the districts which had been awarded to him; and endeavoured to withdraw him, by offering countervailing advantages, from his dangerous alliance with the island, and with the republic of France. Not that we suppose he was consulting Tippoo's interests by pursuing this line of policy; but at that period it was evident that it was a policy dictated by circumstances, and that the Company was not prepared for war. Its coffers were almost exhausted; its troops were scattered through different presidencies; and in short, it was not the time. Nor was it the object at that period to destroy the influence of France, and the power of the Sultan; and both the Governor-general and the Indian government at home, were aware of the deeper policy of allowing the grand project to proceed till the evil had reached a head, and might justify the strongest proceedings. In short,

having fairly warned him, and thrown away much good advice, the Earl of Mornington was now silently taking his measures, leaving the infatuated Sultan to rush upon his own destruction.

The intelligence received of the preparations of Tippoo, and his intrigues with France, confirmed by despatches from Calcutta, and also from the Cape, conveying a copy of the French proclamation, as well as the testimony of eyewitnesses from the island, seemed to leave the Governor-general no alternative; he drew closer the bonds of union with our allies, and stood prepared either for peace or war. He was in possession of a mass of evidence, proving the connexions of the Sultan with the enemy; he knew that the French governor, having no regular troops to spare, had invited all French adventurers to join his standard, and was acquainted with all the proceedings at Mangalore. That these were not the only steps taken by France to promote her own objects by affecting to support her ally; that, as in Egypt, she was pursuing a system of colonial aggression, and rousing enemies against Great Britain in every quarter of the world, he had ample evidence.

To justify his future proceedings, and afford time to mature his plans, he resolved to do nothing which might precipitate the war. Though a body of French, raised in the Isle of France, had been landed at Mangalore; though the Sultan was pushing his military preparations, and a considerable part of his army was equipped for the field, Lord Mornington persevered in the same pacific policy; maintained the same politic and dignified attitude; and was never for a moment thrown off his guard. "It is impossible," he observes, "that you should suppose me to be ignorant of the intercourse which subsists between you and the French, whom you know to be the inveterate enemies of the country, and to be now engaged in an unjust war with the British nation. You cannot imagine me to be indifferent to the transactions which have passed between you and the enemies of my country; nor does it appear necessary or proper that I should any longer conceal from you the surprise and concern with which I perceived you disposed to involve your-

self in all the ruinous consequences of a connexion, which threatens not only to subvert the foundation of friendship between you and the Company, but to introduce into the heart of your kingdom the principles of anarchy and confusion; to shake your own authority; to weaken the obedience of your subjects, and to destroy the religion which you revere."*

The moderation and wisdom which pervades every line of that letter, and appeals in earnest, friendly, and almost affectionate language, to the best feelings as well as to the prudence of the ruler of the Mysore, were, unhappily for him, thrown away; and with blind infatuation he persevered in marshalling his hosts, with the determination to reign an independent monarch, or to perish in the attempt. He was constantly engaged in training his infantry to European tactics, with a numerous artillery, expert gunners, and officers taught by the French. He had inherited from Hyder Ali a stern, uncompromising hatred of his foes, the same indomitable spirit, and much of the talent and activity, which had called for the utmost exertions of Lord Cornwallis and his gallant army to humble into peace.

It was not till the love of enterprise and quenchless hostility of these barbaric monarchs, arrayed the chivalry of the East against the possessions of an English company, exhibiting war upon a grand scale, that the transactions of India possessed much interest for the British public. Remoteness of scene, contempt for the military character of the natives, the opinion that national interests were little concerned with the proceedings of a wealthy company, rendered us indifferent to the progress of our arms and the changes that were going on. The government, both in India and at home, had been chiefly indebted to the exertions of missionaries, and the establishment of societies and schools, for the casual interest which was excited respecting the actual condition, and the prospects of so vast an empire.

But when large armies took the field, and mighty chiefs and

* Despatches. Fort William, 8th Nov. 1798.

monarchs, instead of freebooters and mountain-bands, came down upon the plains, and devastated the richest possessions of a company of English merchants, prepared to contend for the palm of victory and the dominion of the East with Great Britain herself; the people began to open their eyes, and soon became as familiar with Indian affairs, as with those of our country towns. When aided, too, by republican France, native princes were instigated to range themselves under one imperial banner, to overthrow our hard-earned power, it ceased to be a mere commercial question; and with the possession of our colonies, national honour and interests were felt to be at stake. No stronger proofs of the strength of the meditated coalition and the persevering hostility to British dominion could be shown, after the success attending the efforts of a Clive and Cornwallis, and men like them, to repress its growing power, and maintain an attitude which should command respect.

Thus, although it was the object of Lord Mornington to pursue a pacific policy, events rendered it imperative upon him not only to follow up preceding conquests, but to extend and consolidate them. By a series of judicious measures ably executed, he completely foiled the secret efforts of the Sultan and his allies. He appeared to disregard their movements, and left it open to the last moment for the ruler of Mysore to break with his confederates, Zemaun Shah and the French, and adhere to the compact which he had been compelled to accept in 1791. Expostulations being useless, his next step was to impress upon the enemy by his military preparations a sense of British power, sufficient to show the policy of withdrawing from the league while there was yet time.

That this conciliatory and magnanimous conduct, by giving moral force to the campaign, and admitting of extreme and decided measures when the sword was once drawn, was crowned with signal success, appeared by the results of the war. A reputation for moderation and good faith are no less essential for colonial security than the triumph of arms. Both were here attained, with a more complete and ample boundary

which enabled British India to bid defiance to future enemies.

Never for a moment deceived by the specious declarations of the Sultan, "whose friendly heart was disposed to pay every regard to truth and justice, and to strengthen the foundations of concord between the two nations," Lord Mornington judging by his actions, valued his professions at their real worth. Aware of the duplicity of his character and of the blow which was preparing, he nevertheless considered it right to state the grounds of his proceedings before he declared war; and in the journal of the secret department is contained an able exposition of the intrigues and bad faith of Tippoo. (12th August.)

"Since the conclusion of the peace of Seringapatam," it says the Sultan has received the most unequivocal proofs of the disposition of the Company to acknowledge and confirm all his just rights, and to remove every cause of jealousy which might tend to interrupt the continuance of peace; although the servants of the Company in India had not been ignorant of the implacable sentiments of revenge which he had preserved without abatement since the hour of his last defeat. He having prepared the means and instruments of a war of extermination against us, and of annihilating our empire, the present is not merely the case of an injury to be repaired, but of the public safety to be secured against the present and future designs of an irreconcilable, desperate, and treacherous enemy."

Here a decided tone is adopted, which announces the extreme measures intended to be pursued. In the words of his illustrious relative, he was resolved that there should be "no little war." The entire correspondence, and every extract which appears in the despatches of the Duke of Wellington, raise the character of the Governor-general high in the opinion of all judges of true colonial policy. His letters contain comprehensive and statesmanlike views, directed by sound principles and maxims of government, expressed with a simplicity and energy of language seldom met with in the state compositions of the day. The limits assigned to this work, and to the commemo-

ration of the services of the Duke of Wellington, will permit us to give few examples of these admirable compositions, or in these as upon other points, to avail ourselves to the extent we could have wished, of the excellent compilation of the great commander's despatches, so judiciously enlarged and enriched with his private letters by Lieutenant-colonel Gurwood.

The hostile attitude now more boldly resumed by the Sultan, fully justified the severity of the foregoing strictures, and the effective measures by which they were followed. He had leagued with our most formidable enemy, and prepared to invade the English settlements. He had applied to the French Directory, and, with a powerful army encamped under his eye, sought to cloak his designs under the most specious disguises. The calm wisdom of a superior mind, forbearance and magnanimity, were opposed to practised cunning and duplicity, which almost invariably recoil upon their employer. Superiority of moral strength, and upright intentions, render us more than a match for the most refined treachery, and all the little arts of common diplomacy; for the truly wise and powerful march directly to their object. What was the result of the Sultan's diplomatic skirmishing which ushered in the war of the Mysore? It brought down swift destruction upon his head, in one bold and sudden attack on his capital. It was a fate which he had provoked—a measure demanded by one of the soundest maxims of war, to deliberate well in council, to be prompt and rapid in action.* . .

* Tippoo Sultan had desired that a British agent might be sent to him. "Under the present circumstances," replied the Governor-general, "to send Major Doveton to you, could not be attended with those advantages which would have resulted from his mission at a proper season. The allies, however, retaining an anxious desire to effect an adjustment with you, Lieutenant-general Harris, commander of the British troops, has been empowered to receive any embassy which you shall despatch to him. He will also authorize such persons as he may think proper, to concert, in communication with your ambassadors, a new treaty of friendship with your highness, founded on such conditions as appear to the allies to be indispensably necessary to the establishment of a secure and permanent peace." This language is in perfect accordance with all the preceding facts and circumstances which led to the war. The Sultan suddenly broke up the conferences which had commenced

... It is always interesting to be made acquainted with the motives assigned, and with the language employed by one or more of the belligerents upon the eve of a last appeal to arms. These we know; and the next objects of our inquiry are their relative strength, the means at their disposal, and their distinctive features, skill and courage. The enemy whom Colonel Wellesley was about to attack was not an army of natives untutored by European science—mere hordes who fall an easy prey to a small well-disciplined force. The Mysorean infantry and artillery had been trained under French tacticians; the army was, in part, officered by the volunteers of that nation, and French detachments from the Mauritius were supplied by the Directory.

There were other princes, not mere leaders of predatory bands, whose alliance with him, and whose confederated power were not to be despised. The chief Scindiah had an army of not less than seventy-two battalions, organized and led by French officers with artillery, amounting to four hundred and sixty pieces of cannon. The irregular bodies were composed of hardy mountaineers, capable of enduring any fatigue, and whose boldness was scarcely to be checked by the heaviest fire. The Mahratta horse, though not under effective discipline, were formidable, and were bound like the chivalry of feudal Europe, by tenure of land, to attend their princes in the field. But the most numerous body were the volunteers, consisting of adventurers who could find no settled occupation, and were inured from early life to the various modes of Indian warfare. Discipline would have rendered them more formidable; as it was, they could skirmish, join in the attack or pursuit; surprise

with respect to the districts of Amerah and Souliah, and interrupted the intercourse between his subjects and those of the Company on their respective frontiers. On the 9th of January, 1799, the Governor-general, being arrived at Fort St. George, notwithstanding these discouraging circumstances in the conduct of Tippoo Sultan, renewed with increased earnestness the expression of his lordship's anxious desire to despatch an ambassador to the sultan.—*Despatches of the Duke of Wellington, by Lieutenant-colonel Gurwood;* vol. i., p. 18.

isolated parties, and, when least expected, charge fiercely upon the enemy. Sometimes they were known to ride up to the very muzzles of the guns; and when impelled by ungovernable passions, no exploit is deemed too bold for them. They fear less for themselves than for their horses, from which they derive subsistence, rank, wealth, and honour. They scour across immense tracts with incredible activity, levy contributions on the peaceful inhabitants, and every where, like the robber-knights of the middle ages, leave marks of their devastating career. When bearing down upon a broken square or column; and, when seen at a distance with their turbans and various coloured dresses, their horses richly caparisoned, with their gay air and lively action, they have a wild and picturesque appearance. Some of the superior class are mounted on strong bony horses; those of the lower on animals so very inferior, as to be wholly incapable of making an impression upon regular troops.*

In this mixed character lay the cause of their weakness and discomfiture; and fewer numbers, with stricter discipline, would have proved more dangerous to the British power. With regard to the country in which the battle was to be fought, the advantage was upon the side of the native powers, the roads being generally difficult for regular bodies of troops, and not unfrequently impassable. Broad tracks over vast and level plains; narrow defiles, rocky mountain-passes, and deep jungles, render ample supplies, patience, caution, and prodigious labour in the conveyance of baggage and heavy artillery, absolutely necessary.

The rivers at certain seasons, when every stream becomes swollen into a torrent, present no less serious obstacles. Forts and castles commanding the roads and passes were capable of delaying, if not arresting, the progress of an enemy. These

* Besides the large and small horses, they have, like us, others of an intermediate size. The best of this kind are highly-spirited and beautiful creatures, rising from thirteen to fifteen hands, and make excellent roadsters, and are used for travel and the chase, but not in the field.—*Sherer's Military Memoirs*, pp. 10, 15, 25.

were mostly built of solid stone, with walls of prodigious height; and it required considerable time to reduce them. The trials and sufferings of a protracted campaign in such a country need not be described. They are not the result only of geographical position, or the surface of the soil; and their effects are too often experienced in the early fate of those exposed to them. Burning suns, sudden changes—heat, cold, unwholesome dews and wet, try the strongest constitution; while long marches, hunger, thirst, and weariness, are only part of the soldier's lot during an active campaign. These were felt in all their severity by the different British armies in the progress of those wars, forced upon the Company by French intrigues, and the ambition of native princes in the Carnatic, the Mysore, and the Deccan, previous to the close of the last century.

The previous conquests of the Company had been obtained at the expense of much blood and treasure; and it had now again to enter the field against a formidable power, prepared for action, and supported by a growing confederacy. The Mahratta chiefs were invited to make common cause against us; our alliances in the Deccan were threatened, and Zemaun Shah was to invade our territories from the north. The court of the Peshwah at Poonah, was becoming subservient to the league; that of the Nizam to French agency; while the Rajah of Berar, was no less secretly hostile than was Scindiah; and the stern Holkar, bent only upon plunder, hung aloof, like the vulture, ready to join the rising confederacy, and seize the quarry when hunted down by his neighbours.

Such were the foes against whom the Governor-general resolved to strike a decisive blow, before their designs were matured. He had prepared, for some time, the armies of Coromandel and Malabar; strengthened our alliance with the Nizam, and succeeded in surprising the French officers in his command. So promptly were the troops assembled under General Harris, that they reached Hyderabad on the 10th of October, surrounded the French force, and disarmed the sepoys. The whole affair

was conducted with so much spirit and address, as to call forth the liveliest marks of approbation at the different presidencies, and create fresh confidence in the measures of the new government.

Sept. 1798.—Meanwhile, the 33d regiment, which had been placed on the Madras establishment, was encamped at Wallajahbad, awaiting the arrival of General Harris, to take the command of the army at Vellore. During this interval, Colonel Wellesley lost no opportunity of improving its discipline and efficiency. By constant attention, he had rendered it one of the finest corps in the army; inured it to the rules and all the combined field movements requisite for an Indian campaign, and at the same time, improved the health and appearance of the men. His system of supplying the bazaars—the Indian commissariat—was the best adapted to ensure a cheap and constant provision, and to obviate all chance of peculation; and so highly were his merits here appreciated, that after reading the reports of the departments, the commander-in-chief published a general order, publicly to express his approbation of the arrangements which Colonel Wellesley had adopted. He had been equally attentive to what he considered his other duties; in extending his information both military and political, and devoting the hours he could spare from society and the exercise of his troops, to professional studies and the perusal of history.

Lord Mornington had personally superintended the preparations at Fort St. George, whence he addressed fresh remonstrances to the Sultan, to which he received no reply (9th Jan.)* within the period from the expiration of which, active hostilities were to commence.

Upon the 3d of February, General Harris received orders to enter the Mysore territory; but, with every exertion, it was found impracticable to prepare for its march so large a force, exceeding 20,000 men; of whom, 2600 were cavalry, and 4300

* These, with a recapitulation of all other grievances, are to be found embodied in the subsequent declaration of war.

Europeans, before the 11th of the month. It was joined on the 18th by the British force in the service of the Nizam, amounting to 6500, commanded by Lieutenant-colonel Dalrymple; and the contingent furnished by the Nizam of the same strength, including the Sepoys under British officers, led by Captain Malcolm, and a body of native cavalry under Captain Walker. These had reached Chittoor before the arrival of the Madras army from Vellore. The Bombay army, under Lieutenant-general Stuart, was ordered to co-operate from Malabar, and marched from Cananore; (21st Feb.) while information of these movements was sent to the different allied courts, and to the British admiral; and war with Tippoo Sultan was formally announced throughout the different presidencies.

The Nizam's force, under the superintendence of Meer Alum, was further strengthened by the addition of the 33d regiment, and intrusted, with the British battalions, to the command of Colonel Wellesley. This appointment was made at the express wish of the Nizam's minister, as well as of General Harris, and was ultimately of great importance in promoting the friendly relations between the government and the court of Hyderabad. Upon entering the field, therefore, Colonel Wellesley found himself at the head of a respectable force, comprising his own regiment, several British battalions, two brigades of artillery, the Nizam's infantry under Captain Malcolm, and a body of cavalry. The entire army, under General Harris, consisted of upwards of 30,000 men, well equipped, amply provided with every necessary, and in an excellent state of discipline; and under officers, in all its departments, distinguished for their skill and ability. A finer army never took the field. Along the western line, General Stuart was at the head of nearly 7000 men; there was a force under Colonel Brown, and another commanded by Colonel Read, marching upon the seat of war from the southern districts of the Carnatic, each amounting to nearly 5000 men.

The commander-in-chief was invested with unrestricted

power,* and provided with a political and diplomatic commission, of which Colonel Wellesley was a member;† but which was not entitled to act except in obedience to the orders of the general.

After the different armies had received orders, and were already upon their march, there arrived a letter from Tippoo Sultan, (13th Feb.,) to which the reply returned by the Governor-general expressed a sincere regret that the friendly intimation contained in the letter of the 9th of January had produced no effect. (22d.) This letter was accompanied by a declaration from the government and its allies, the Nizam and the Peshwah.

It was evident, by preparations upon so extensive a scale, that it was intended to destroy the power of the ruler of Mysore. As little as possible was left to depend upon casualties, and what is usually termed the fortune of war. Vigilant superintendence and provident foresight, had prepared materials for a brief and decided campaign. It commenced in the spring of 1799; and, on the 8th of March, General Harris crossed the frontier, and encamped upon the territories of Tipoo Sultan. He forwarded the Governor-general's letter, issued a declaration of war, and commenced the reduction of some of the forts. Most of the garrisons abandoned them without resistance as the allies approached.

Tippoo also passed his own frontier, and advanced boldly in

* General, afterwards Sir George Harris, was an excellent commander, and early distinguished himself. He was the eldest son of a clergyman, and was educated by a friend of his father for the army, which he entered at the commencement of the American war. His bravery and intelligence recommended him to the notice of Lord Moira; he received promotion, and more than fulfilled the expectations which had been formed of him. His services in the West Indies, and subsequently in our Eastern Colonies, soon raised him to the rank of general, and at length he succeeded to that of commander-in-chief of the British forces in India.

† It was composed of Colonel the Hon. A. Wellesley, Lieut.-col. Barry Close, Lieut.-col. Agnew, and Captain Malcolm; Captain Macaulay, secretary.

the hope of cutting off the army of Bombay. (March 6th.) He took up a position so close to that of the advanced guard, that his tents might easily have been seen; but, from the wooded nature of the ground, it was impossible for General Stuart to ascertain his formidable numbers, and the presence of the Sultan himself. The British force consisted of four battalions, posted near Sedaseer, under Colonel Montresor; other troops, with the park of artillery and provisions, were at Seedapoore and Ahmootenar—the first, eight, and the last, twelve miles in the rear. There were thus scarcely two thousand men to sustain the attack; and Tippoo having silently penetrated the thick jungle in front of the British position, fell upon the single brigade, at once in front and flank, with the utmost impetuosity. Though pressed by superior numbers, the native battalions defended themselves during five hours, until General Stuart arrived with a reinforcement. Still the contest was continued with obstinacy, till at length the Sultan drew off with the loss of fifteen hundred men. He had brought upwards of ten thousand into action; and it is remarkable that the troops engaged upon both sides, were natives of Hindostan. The Sultan retired to his camp at Periapatam, where he remained until the 11th, when he prepared to renew his attacks upon the invaders.

General Harris could not follow up with celerity the combined movement upon Seringapatam; and owing to his heavy baggage and the loss of bullocks, he was obliged to make frequent halts as he advanced. He reached Cankanelli only on the 21st, and on the next day was fortunate enough to discover two tanks, which the enemy had not had time to destroy at Achel. Clouds of horse soon showed themselves in almost all directions, laying waste the country, and even burning towns and villages, like the Russians, to stop the British advance. Once they had the temerity to fall upon Colonel Wellesley's rear-guard, consisting of a company of sepoys. About twenty of these were killed, and Lieutenant Reynolds, with twenty-six others, wounded, before the enemy could be effectually repelled,

and the army then proceeded without fresh annoyance for some time. Menaced upon all sides, it was Tippoo's policy to attack his enemies in detail, to ravage their line of march, cut off their convoys, and take them at every advantage he could.

Colonel Wellesley's force in particular, forming the reserve, was encumbered with heavy baggage, and immense numbers of ineffective hands; there being no less than forty thousand brinjarries, with numerous attendants attached to the public stores, and a long train of ordnance. Having been disappointed in his *coup de main* in this quarter, and made demonstrations as if to oppose General Harris, (March 11th,) Tippoo marched rapidly to cover his own capital, not having calculated upon the impediments encountered by the Madras army, against which he now advanced in force.

14th.—Some four thousand horse made their appearance within sight of Bangalore; but after reconnoitring pretty closely, upon the firing of a few shots, withdrew. It was on leaving Bangalore, by the south road leading to Seringapatam, that the progress of the army became very difficult, and the native contractors appeared to exercise all their ingenuity, notwithstanding their large means of transport, in creating fresh wants, and opposing a thousand obstacles to every advance—impossible to all arguments, and often disregarding even threats and punishments. The conduct of these people gave Colonel Wellesley some insight into the native character, which was not lost upon him; and, in his future expeditions, he was eminently successful in managing his brinjarries, so as to fill the bazaars, and keep up an ample supply.

During the toilsome march through jungles and defiles to Acheb, intelligence arrived of the Sultan's sudden advance on Allagoor. (23d.) It was necessary to secure the posts and passes of importance, and the right wing of the cavalry turned from Acheb, while the left and the battering train advanced to that place. Colonel Wellesley was still in the rear; marched from Cankanelli, and encamped in front of the village of Alla-geor, from which the Sultan retired. He withdrew also from

the strong heights of the Maddoor, without offering opposition to the passage of the allies. But on the 27th it was observed that he had halted, and drawn up on the high ground beyond Mallavelly. Thence he commenced a brisk fire, as if to prevent the army from encamping. The pickets were also attacked; fresh troops were sent, and the Sultan appeared resolved to risk a general engagement. The British, under General Harris, formed the right; and the Nizam's army, commanded by Colonel Wellesley, the left. In deploying into line, an opening between two brigades caught the eye of Tippoo (scarcely less quick than that of Hyder Ali), and he bore down upon the space with a body of cavalry. He could make no impression, while, by the simultaneous advance of the British, he was himself outflanked upon his left. Colonel Wellesley had been directed to carry the enemy's extreme right, strongly posted on the crest of a rocky ridge.

His plan of attack having been communicated to General Harris, received full approbation, and General Floyd was directed to support it. The Colonel instantly advanced *en echelon* of battalions, followed by three regiments of horse. Aware of the emergency, Tippoo brought down a column of two thousand infantry, (March 27th,) which moved in perfect order upon the 33d regiment, when that corps, reserving its fire, received that of the enemy at a distance of about sixty yards, and pressing rapidly on, threw in a close fire, and charging with the bayonet, put the entire column to the rout. At the same moment, General Floyd, falling upon them with his cavalry, completed their destruction,* and slew great numbers.

The Sultan's troops fought with courage and even desperation, but nothing could withstand the steadiness and discipline of the British, and the result was not for a moment doubtful. The enemy suffered severely, but the loss of the allies was com-

* "The habit of encountering men who gave no quarter, caused the British dragoons to be savage in the hot moment of the *mâle*. Their helmets were surmounted by thick plumes of red horsehair, which fell over their right cheeks, and gave them a stern look."—*Sherer's Military Memoirs*, p. 22.

paratively trifling, owing to the rapid advance and steady conduct of the men. Of the column opposed to Colonel Wellesley, upwards of one thousand were supposed to have fallen; that corps, as well as the squadron of horse which charged the European brigade, under the eye of the Sultan, having behaved with distinguished gallantry.

28th.—The British army, having moved forward to Sosilay, passed the river Cauvery at a point where it is easily forded,—a movement wholly unexpected by the Sultan, who was compelled to fall back upon his capital. By this route, the army arrived before Seringapatam (April 5th) within a week after the battle of Mallavelly, took up its ground, and proceeded to invest the place. The camp fronted the west face of the fort; a line of intrenchments had been formed extending from the Dowlut Baug to the Periapatam bridge; and between these works and the river, the infantry of the enemy were encamped. The distance between the fortress and the camp was about three thousand five hundred yards. Looking towards the east, the camp rested on very high ground, gradually falling as it approached the left flank, which was doubly secured by an aqueduct and by the river. This aqueduct took an easterly course from the left, till it came within one thousand seven hundred yards of the fort, where it took a direction towards the Sultaunpettah Tope, serving in its winding course as a strong intrenchment; while some deep ravines in the rear of the camp afforded protection from sudden attacks of the enemy's cavalry. The whole encampment occupied a safe position; and it was abundantly supplied with every requisite, especially with excellent water. Within the precincts of the lines there were not less than five large topes, consisting of delicious fruit trees — besides the rich cocoa, with the tall arica and the graceful bamboo. It was thus abundantly supplied with materials at hand to carry on the works, and was at once free from surprise and the necessity of making foraging parties for wood, water, or other supplies.

Here the last desperate stake of the ruler of Mysore was to be played for in the deadly and imminent breach, and in the

fierce wild storm destined to deprive him at once of royalty and life. He was not long held in suspense : the deadly war was at his threshold ; its progress was as rapid as it was terrible, more like the hurried events of some tale of fiction, than the slowly gathering calamities of real life. In the front of the British positions appeared several villages and rocky eminences that afforded cover, so as to enable the enemy to throw their rockets among the tents.

It became necessary, for the perfect security of the camp, that the rocket-men and their supporters should be driven from their posts. With this view, a division consisting of the 33d regiment, and a native battalion, commanded by Colonel Wellesley, the 12th regiment and two battalions of sepoys, with their guns, under Lieutenant-colonel Shawe, were ordered to be in readiness at sunset. (April 5th.) The force of Colonel Shawe was directed to attack the posts at the aqueduct, and that of Colonel Wellesley to make a diversion at the same time by carrying the Sultaunpettah Tope.

It was on this occasion that the first letter which appears among the Indian despatches, addressed to General Harris, was written ; and it showed that promptness and attention to duty, which formed so early a feature of this great soldier's character.

Colonel Wellesley had not been informed where the post was to be established ; and he therefore requested that the general would meet him in the afternoon in front of the lines, and show it to him. In the mean time he ordered his battalions to be in readiness, though, upon looking at the Tope as he passed by, it appeared to him, that when possession should be got of the bank of the nullah, the Tope, as a matter of course, must fall, as the latter was in the rear of the former.

The two divisions moved a little after sunset. The darkness of the night was an unfavourable circumstance, and it might even have led to disastrous results. Advancing briskly, Colonel Shawe made himself master of a ruined village, not forty yards from the aqueduct. At the same instant,

Colonel Wellesley with one wing of the 33d regiment, attacked the Tope; but, on entering it, was assailed on every side by a severe fire, consisting both of musketry and of rockets. Every thing was in favour of the party attacked—the badness of the ground, the uncertainty of the enemy's position, and the extreme vivacity of the fire; all which determined Colonel Wellesley not to press on, but to confine the operations to a simple diversion in favour of Colonel Shawe's object of securing the aqueduct. He at once saw the necessity of withdrawing, and leaving the prosecution of the affair to a more seasonable time. Such is frequently observed to be the result of a night attack; and we learn from the private diary of General Harris, the commander-in-chief, that, in his own words, "he remained under great anxiety until near twelve at night, from the fear that our troops had fired upon each other." Colonel Shawe very soon reported himself in possession of the post; and as he had previously sent to know what had become of the two native battalions, the commander-in-chief, when a second firing commenced, became justly apprehensive that in the dark they had mistaken each other. It proved that all the firing was from the enemy, his majesty's 12th regiment having scarcely fired a shot during the whole night.

Towards midnight Colonel Wellesley entered the commander-in-chief's tent, in a good deal of agitation, to inform him that he had not carried the Tope. This partial failure was properly looked upon by the general as one of those accidents which in war, above all things, must often unavoidably occur; and that he considered it in this light, his previous apprehension, and his own subsequent declaration, afford the most convincing evidence, and acquit Colonel Wellesley of the slightest suspicion of want of zeal or good conduct in this momentary reverse.

It is clear from the preceding letter, that the Colonel had his doubts as to the necessity of taking the Sultaunpettah at all, as the attainment of the bank of the nullah, which was Shawe's object, would in itself throw the Tope into his power. It proved

that the 33d, with which he attacked, got into confusion under a terrific fire in the dark ; a circumstance which, in the words of the general-in-chief, "was a great pity, as it must have been very unpleasant to Colonel Wellesley ; but there is not the shadow of blame. Altogether, circumstances considered," he adds, "we got off very well." General Baird also missed his road in returning from an expedition at the same time ; "although," he concludes, "he should have thought it impossible, so that no wonder night attacks so often fail."*

After the firing had ceased, Colonel Wellesley retired to his tent, and proceeded to make his report.† Colonel Shawe still held the village, notwithstanding he was very greatly annoyed by the enemy's fire from the aqueduct, which had received considerable reinforcements. It was imperative, therefore, for the security of the camp, and the support of Colonel Shawe, that the Tope should be carried. A new disposition was made to drive in the whole of the enemy's outposts, extending from the river Cauvery to the Tope. With this view, General Harris ordered three simultaneous attacks to be conducted by Colonel Wellesley, under cover of some guns. At nine in the morning the Colonel again advanced on the Tope with the Scotch brigade, two battalions of sepoys, and four guns, in addition to his former force, and the point was soon carried. He had detached some parties to take the enemy in flank, and thus threw them into complete confusion.‡ Seizing the favour-

* The Private Diary of the late General Harris. Despatches, &c.

† The same.

‡ It is almost needless, after the very able exposition of the real circumstances of the affair by Colonel Gurwood, and his reply to some observations made by Mr. Hook in the " Memoirs of the late General Sir David Baird," to allude to such insinuations as have been made with regard to the failure of the night attack. With the best intentions of stating only the truth, it is very probable that Mr. Hook, not having had access to the information now before the author, may have been misled. Colonel Wellesley was again selected as the most approved officer for the purpose, to carry the Sultaunpettah Tope, and being daylight, he conducted the attack, and carried the post in the most rapid and brilliant manner.

able moment, Colonel Shawe also rushed upon the enemy from the ruined village, and they were driven with equal precipitation by Colonel Wallace from a village on the right flank.

The success was complete; and Colonel Barry Close, who had joined Colonel Wellesley on this occasion, eager to announce the gallant manner in which the movement had been executed by his friend, was the first to enter the general-in-chief's tent, informing him that "it had been done in high style, and without loss." The positions thus obtained were immediately occupied; and a strong connected line of posts, extending from the Cauvery to the village of Sultaunpettah, a distance of two miles, was made secure. A complete line of contravallation, by means of the aqueduct, at a proper distance from the fortress and from the line of attack, was an advantage which soon brought this eventful siege to its close.

Indeed, it was now carried on with the utmost gallantry and perseverance, and the defence was resolute and desperate. General Harris himself conducted the entire details; while the letters which passed between him and Colonel Wellesley are a proof of the confidence reposed in the judgment of the latter. On the 6th of April the Colonel proposed an arrangement of posts on his right and rear, which should protect Meer Allum, the brinjarries, the park, and the cavalry, from attempts of the horse and rockets, calculated greatly to annoy them. After writing to the general, he went out to see what support he could give to his post—so ably carried—at Sultaunpettah, and sent a further report on his return. Upon the 7th he suggested a reduction of the guards for the outposts; there not being men enough, between foraging parties and outlying pickets, to give the usual relief. He requested the general to meet him, as he had expressed a wish, to inspect them in the afternoon at any hour he should please to appoint; adding, that he could show him a situation where two embrasures might be opened on the bank of the nullah with advantage, and render his post still more secure.

The same afternoon, a body of eight hundred horse passed

round by Colonel Wellesley's right, and the rear of the general-in-chief. They kept clear of the pickets, being merely a reconnoitring party, attended only by straggling footmen. He sent word also that the foragers were coming in well loaded, and that he had ordered the battalion to stay where it was, ready to turn out, but (as battalions were now scarce articles) not to move till further orders. Keeping his eye on the body of cavalry that had passed his right, which appeared to him more like a line of march, than intended for a *coup de main*, he observed it, after inclining to the left, again wheel round by his right; and ordered the battalion, already mentioned, to advance on the high road. This movement was to protect the foragers coming in, as well as the rear of the camp, should the enemy be inclined to molest it; but on seeing our advance it forthwith disappeared. A brigade being ordered to take up ground, with four field-pieces, bearing upon the same road, it was the Colonel's next object to examine the position, and ascertain whether the guns were sufficient for the purpose.

Ever active in his inspections and in his reports, of which last it appears that he sometimes made no less than seven or eight on the same day, he observed that a body of infantry, with guns, had followed the cavalry in the same direction. He announced to the general his perfect preparation against any attack, whether made by night or by day, upon his flank of the line; adding, with his peculiar prescience, "if he does attack us here, he will probably attack the outposts at the same time; and, in that case, we must depend upon your line for the support of our posts."

The siege being now pressed with vigour, new proposals were repeatedly sent to head-quarters by the Sultan; but the advanced season, and the increasing scarcity of provisions, made delay dangerous; while an additional reason for pressing the works was the opinion entertained by the Governor-general, and expressed in his letters to the Court of Directors. Fresh circumstances arose, which disposed him to think that if the

course of the war should favour the attempt, it would be prudent and justifiable entirely to overthrow the power of Tippoo! (23d April.) Accordingly, he signified his wish to General Harris, that the resources of the Sultan should be reduced to the very lowest state, and even utterly destroyed, if the events of the war should furnish the opportunity.

It was doubtless the knowledge, or, at all events, the apprehension of these facts, which led to the desperate character of Tippoo's movements, and subsequent defence of his capital. The victim of his own impolicy and ambition, he saw that his destruction was aimed at and had become inevitable. There was no shrinking from the sentence that had gone forth against him, and all that was left him was to die manfully, with his sword in his hand. Hence, like one of his own royal tigers, he turned so fiercely upon his pursuers. With a column of 6000 infantry, joined to Lally's corps of Frenchmen, he made more than one furious sortie, especially against the Bombay army. Though repeatedly driven in, he as resolutely renewed his efforts, and sometimes with a loss of six or seven hundred men upon a single sally.

On the evening of the 26th, it had been deemed necessary to dislodge the enemy from some intrenchments behind the bank of a water-course, within 380 yards of the fortress. To effect this required a series of well-conducted attacks, which were intrusted to Colonel Wellesley, who on that day commanded in the trenches. (April 26th.) The resistance was extremely obstinate, and it was only by the well-timed support of Colonel Campbell, and continual reinforcements, that point after point (each inch of ground being disputed) of these strong intrenchments was carried. The success was complete; but the loss, both of native and British troops, was very considerable.

30th.—The city was now closely invested,—all the resources of the besieging army, and the most active duties of all ranks, were called forth to accomplish this object, while the season admitted

of it. (May 2d.) Colonel Wellesley was incessant in his attention to the details necessary for the last struggle; it being already decided to carry the place by storm.*

But as fast as breaches were made, they were filled up in the night with gabions, notwithstanding the severe fire kept up against the enemy. "We did all our work last night," he observes; "looked for the ford, and Lieutenant Lalor crossed over to the glacis on the left of the beach. He found the wall seven feet high, and the water fourteen inches deep. It is in no part more so, and the passage by no means difficult. Several other officers crossed by different routes, but none went so far as Lieutenant Lalor. All agree in the practicability of crossing with troops."†

The breaching battery, on the morning of the 30th, was opened on the bastion. Upon the 2d of May another battery was established, in spite of the enemy's fire, and played upon the curtain to its right. Both, with the supporting batteries, kept up a terrific cannonade, the thunder of which reverberated loudly among the hills, and seemed to shake both the fortress and the camp, as the shock fell heavily upon the walls; and, as if to render the effect complete, as described by an eye-witness, a magazine of rockets suddenly blew up in the fort,

* "The fort or city of Seringapatam is situated on a small island formed by the river Cauvery, which, breaking against the rocky bank, disparts its streams into separate but wide channels; the waters flow sluggishly along, till they meet about three miles below.

"The city is built at the upper end, and the arms of the river, at that point, embrace the walls. The island has a naked, dreary, appearance, and is about a mile in width, below the city. The place is fortified in the old Indian fashion. Obstacles are clumsily multiplied; and, especially at the south-west angle, wall rises above wall in complicated obstruction. Many of the bastions are square, but there are a few of the regular European form; they are connected, however, by walls, long, lofty, and straight, after the manner of the Hindoos.

"The north-western angle was that selected by the general as the point of attack; the river at that season was low, its bed wide, and filled with rocks and fragments of granite."—*Sherer's Military Memoirs*.

† Gurwood's Despatches, vol. i.

sending the fiery devastation far and wide. Volumes of flames, bursting with the loud crash, pierced high into the sky, instantly illuminating the before darkened heavens, and shooting their forked lightnings through the war-clouded air.*

Upon the 3d of May a practicable breach was at length announced, in the *fause braye* wall, and, on the night of the 3d, the main rampart became a heap, presenting only a yawning ruin. On the morning of the 4th the troops destined for the storm were placed in the trenches before daylight, and all continued silent for some time within the city. The hour fixed upon for the assault was during that sultry, overpowering heat of the afternoon, when repose becomes almost a necessity, and that extreme lassitude, peculiar to the climate, creeps over all the senses.†

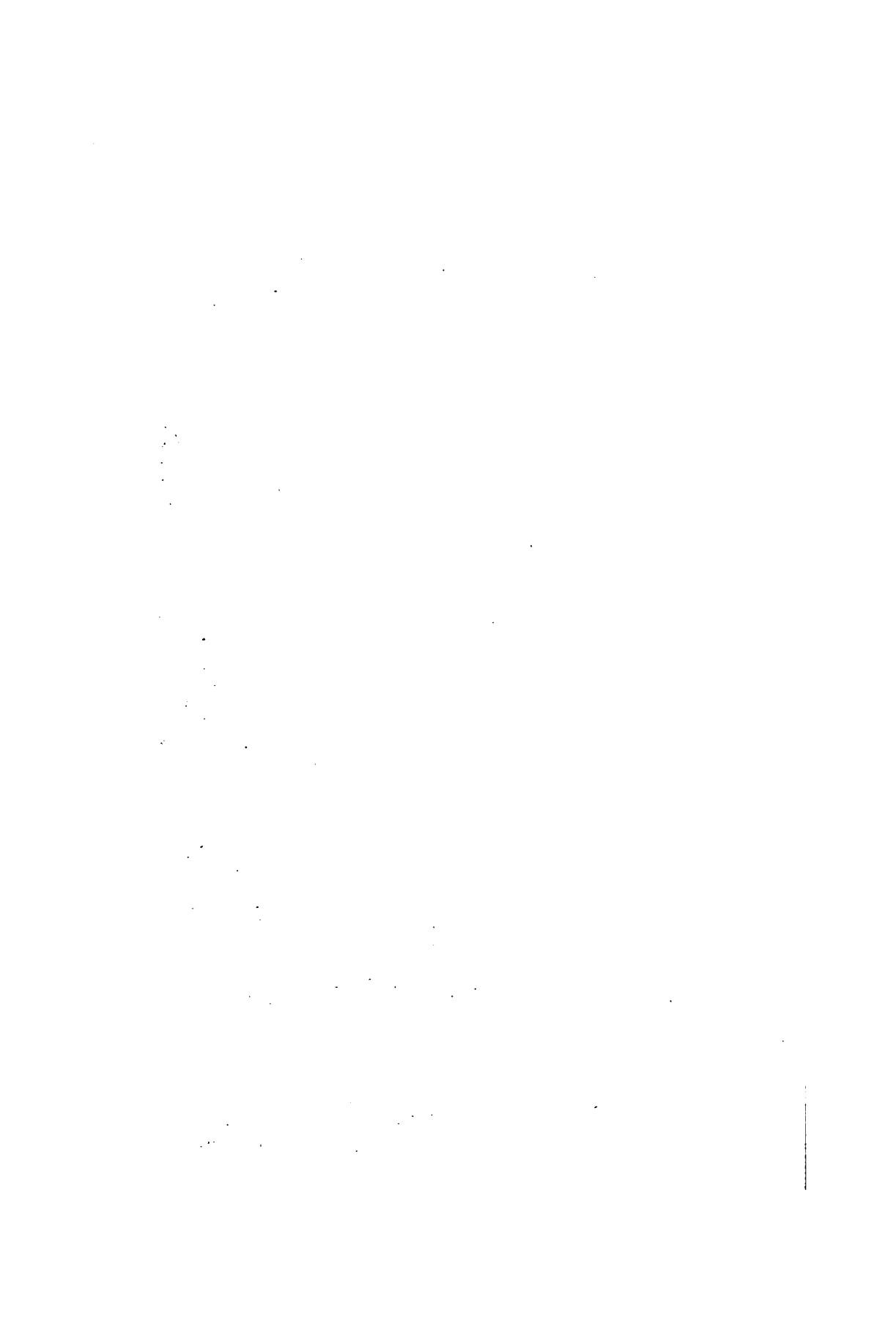
Scaling-ladders and all other materials for the assault had been early provided; the heat became intense, a slumbrous silence hung upon the massive walls of the fortress, and a stillness no less awful was preserved in the trenches.‡ - It was at this moment that the brave Sir David Baird,§ addressing the men he was about to lead to the storm, cried out, "Now, my

* A city in India besieged, presents night after night a sublime spectacle to the besiegers, from the large and frequent use made by Indians of blue lights, and other fireworks, besides rockets, which are thrown in great quantities, and are very troublesome and destructive.—*Sherer's Military Memoirs*.

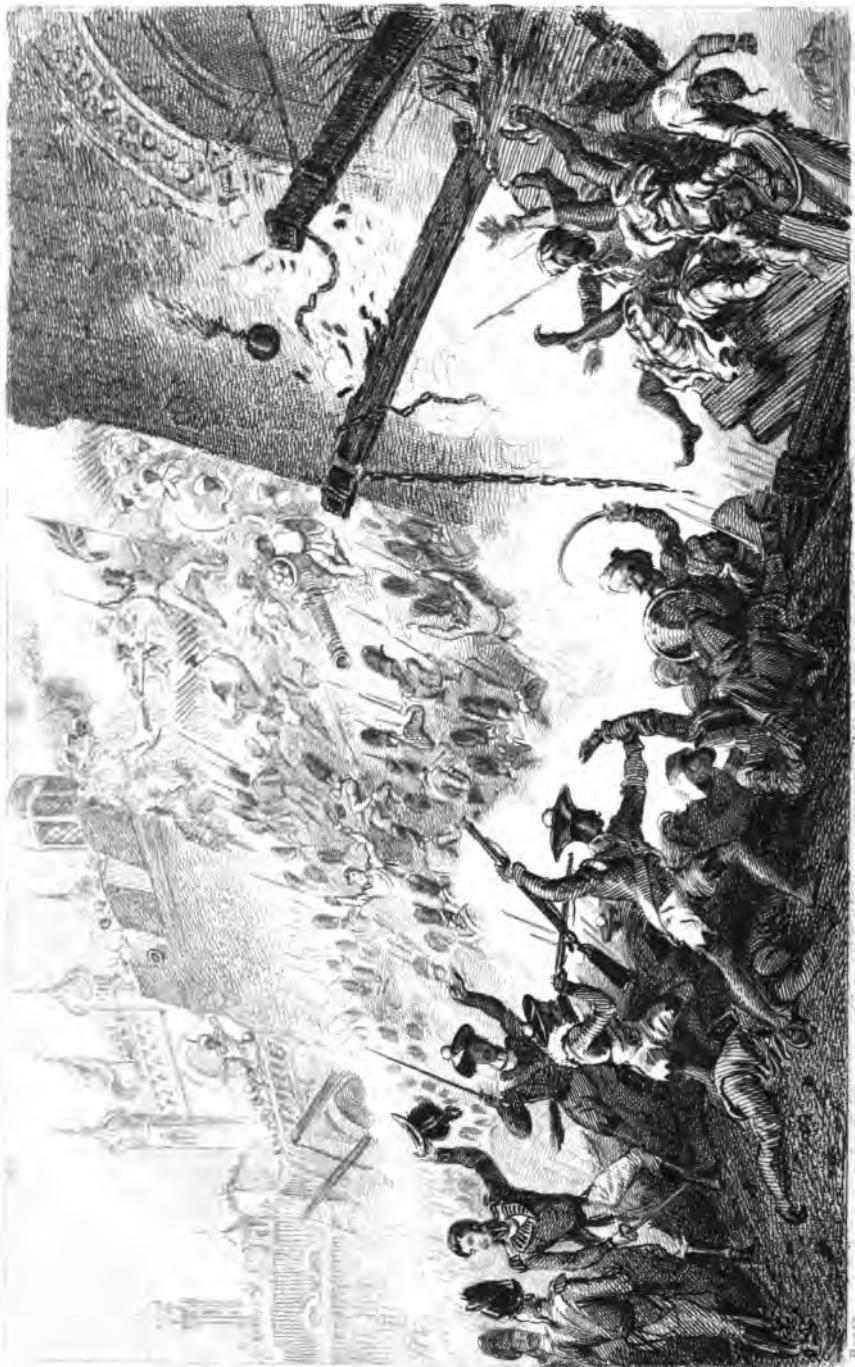
† Hot, panting, breathless for the signal, men from the far north and west that had left their thresholds at home fair, flaxen-headed youths, lay by their native comrades, looking up to the fierce sun, and wellnigh as swart as they.—*Sherer's Military Memoirs*.

‡ It was confidently expected that the troops in the fortress would be least prepared to resist;—the experience of former wars, and especially of that under Lord Cornwallis, having proved that the enemy was always found more watchful and alert, than in the heat of day.—*Gurwood's Despatches*.

§ The honour of taking Seringapatam was justly confided to the valour and intelligence of that distinguished soldier. He led to the storm two thousand five hundred British, and one thousand eight hundred native troops; and surely had any degree of jealousy, ill-will, or any other little and unworthy motives influenced a soldier like Harris, in favour of Colonel Wellesley, or the latter in his feelings towards Baird, so signal a mark of confidence and such responsibility would hardly have been reposed in him.



THE STORMING OF SEVILLA PLATE.



brave fellows, follow me, and prove yourselves worthy the name of British soldiers!" A sudden rush from the trenches broke the pervading calm; it was that of the forlorn hope as it hastened forward to open the way, followed with equal alacrity by the columns destined for its support. The width and rocky channel of the Cauvery, its exposure to a hot fire, the imperfect breach, added to the strength of the place and the courage and skill of its defenders, presented obstacles such as only the force and courage of his men could have justified an able commander in attempting to overcome. But, regardless of a tremendous fire, the troops, rushing through the bed of the river, reached the opposite bank, and in less than ten minutes, the British colours were planted on the summit of the breach.* In a few more, it was thronged with men, who, filing off right and left, by General Baird's directions, entered upon the ramparts. In fact, the fortress was won. Meantime, Tippoo Sultan had displayed greater valour and resolution than skill. He had neglected to cut a trench so as to insulate the angle of the fort in which the breach had been effected, and the ramparts were soon cleared.

That morning he had risen early, as usual, and went to visit the outer rampart, from which he could observe what was passing on both sides. There he remained till noon, when he took

* The forlorn hope was led by a sergeant of the name of Graham. He was the first to mount the breach, when, having given three cheers, he shouted, "Success to Lieutenant Graham!" alluding to his commission, should he survive. He led on his men, and on reaching the rampart, struck the colour staff in it, exclaiming, "I'll show them the British flag!" but at the same instant was shot through the head.

Lieutenant-colonel Dunlop performed also astonishing feats of valour. He engaged in a personal contest with one of Tippoo's sirdars, who made a desperate defence, but whom he mortally wounded, receiving at the same time a desperate cut in the wrist, which did not prevent his reaching the top of the breach, where he fell from loss of blood. Colonel Sherbrooke, Lieutenant Hill, and Lieutenant Lawrence, were also among those who so gallantly carried the place.

his customary repast under a pandal or awning. Having left strict orders with Meer Goffar, a favourite officer, to keep a strict guard, he had scarcely left the spot before he was informed that Meer Goffar was killed by a cannon-ball. "Well," he replied, "Meer Goffar was never afraid of death;" and directing his attendants to load his carbines, he instantly ordered the troops under arms. Hastening towards the breach, he met his troops in flight, and saw the van of the assailants scaling the walls. He tried to rally the fugitives, both by his voice and example, repeatedly firing on the troops as they mounted the breach. Almost alone, he retreated to the north ramparts, where, surrounded by numbers of his bravest troops, he continued to dispute the traverses one after another, assisted by the enfilading fire from the inner walls. The assailants were compelled to halt, until the 12th, crossing the inner ditch, took him in flank; and he retreated, fighting, towards the gate of the inner fort. Here he mounted his horse; and the British pressing on, he made for the gate, followed by his palanquin, and a number of officers and troops. Here he received a musket-ball in the right side, but still kept his seat till he was stopped half-way through the arch, where he was struck by a second ball, close to the other. His horse being also wounded sunk under him, and his turban fell to the ground. He was raised up by his officers, now fast falling around him, and placed in his palanquin, where he lay exhausted; till the Europeans rushing in, one of the soldiers seized the Sultan's sword-belt, which was very rich, and attempted to pull it off. Roused at the indignity, the offended monarch made a cut at the soldier, whom he wounded in the knee, and at the same instant was himself shot through the head. He instantly expired, where he lay, surrounded by heaps of the dying and the dead.

Major Allan was the first to summon the palace, which surrendered after a brief parley; General Baird was already at its gates. The sons of Tippoo were brought into his presence;*

* Two youths, from fifteen to seventeen years of age.

terror was impressed upon their features ; and they had not yet heard of their father's death. They knew the sufferings which General Baird, when a prisoner, had undergone, and that several Europeans taken during the siege, had been put to death. Yet the just indignation of their conqueror, gave way to milder feelings as he beheld them trembling before him, with their eyes bent in tears upon the ground. He at once soothed their fears, assured them of their safety, and bade them rely on the promises of protection which he had given. General Baird now proceeded to the northern gateway, where he was informed that the Sultan had fallen. When the body was first recognised amidst heaps of slain, the eyes were open and it was so warm, that Colonel Wellesley, who was already on the spot, was doubtful whether he did not still breathe; his countenance was no way disturbed, but wore an appearance of fearless calm. His turban, jacket, and sword-belt were gone; and an officer who was present, with the leave of General Baird, tore off from his right arm the talisman, which contained, sewed up in pieces of fine flowered silk, an amulet, and some magical characters written in Arabic and Persian. The body was placed in the palanquin, and conveyed to the court of the palace— whence he had only that morning issued—still the Sultan of the Mysore.

General Baird having expressed a desire to be relieved, Colonel Wellesley being next upon the roster, was ordered the same night to take command of the fortress. He ordered preparations to be made for the Sultan's funeral, and permitted the principal Cauzee, as was customary, to superintend. He also gave directions that four flank companies of Europeans should attend, and that minute guns should be fired during the interval—intending to show due honour to the remains of a brave soldier. Yet such was the terror at first inspired by the dreadful storm, and the presence of the injured Baird, who it was feared might take vengeance on those who had oppressed him, that the Prince Abdul Khalie was afraid to

accept of these marks [of honour, till convinced of the real intent.

We find that the first use made by Colonel Wellesley of his power as commander of Seringapatam, was to conciliate the inhabitants, to administer strict justice, and prevent every kind of excess. He went himself into the houses of the principal inhabitants, and established safeguards; and all classes soon felt a general confidence in his measures. The inhabitants and the country people, who had fled on all sides, returned into the town, the usual avocations were resumed, the bazaars were again stored, and it was declared by an eyewitness, that three days after the storm the leading streets were so crowded as to be almost impassable, presenting rather the appearance of a fair than of a newly-captured town.

In his correspondence with the commander-in-chief, Colonel Wellesley describes the difficulties with which he had to contend in preserving due order and respect for the laws, and the necessity there was for hanging some of the plunderers by way of example. He also notices the judicious conduct of General Baird, in having, previous to his arrival, given the treasure in charge to the prize agents.* For a few days, the new governor considered it advisable that the officers of the army should suspend the gratification of their curiosity, and that none but those on duty should come into the town. It would increase the confusion and terror of the inhabitants; and, till both subsided, it could not be expected that they would return to their habitations.

Having buried the dead, established peace, and given orders as to the treasure, it became his next consideration to obtain a permanent garrison, so as to permit him to discharge his duties

* "There are some tigers here," adds the Colonel in a postscript, "which I wish Meer Allum would send for, or else I must give orders to have them shot, as there is no food for them, and nobody to attend to them, and they are getting violent."

as one of the commissioners appointed for the final regulation and the details of the new conquest. The removal of the families of Hyder Ali and Tippoo Sultan, had become indispensable, by the policy of restoring to their throne the children of the former dynasty. In removing the fallen princes from Seringapatam to the Carnatic, Colonel Wellesley, as we shall show, adopted such precautions, as completely to obviate the apprehension of commotion or escape.

CHAPTER III.

(1800 to 1805.)

The Sultan's seraglio and treasury—Delicate questions—Displeasure of the Governor-general—Appointment to command the troops—Letters—Civil duties—Solidity of his views—Active service—Expedition against Dhondiah—Success of the campaign—Civil government—Exertions of Colonel Wellesley—Visits different places in the Mysore—Correspondence with his friends—Playful turn of mind—Strict attention to orders—Confidence reposed in him by the Governor-general—Projected expedition to Batavia—Command in the Mysore—Correspondence with the Governor-general and with Lord Clive—Suggestions and plans for the new expedition—Ardour in the public service—Acts on his own responsibility—Incurrs the displeasure of the Governor-general—General Baird—Colonel Wellesley's vindication—Correspondence with his brothers—His affectionate disposition—His candour and frankness—High sense of honour and justice—Affair of General Baird—Illness of Colonel Wellesley—Return to Mysore—Military chiefs—Anecdotes—Active campaign—Successes—Pursuit of the rebel chiefs—Skilful combinations—Restoration of the Peshwah—Diplomatic skill—Justice and humanity—Active war—Comprehension and vigour of mind—His victories in the Deccan—Assaye—Anecdotes—Army of General Lake—Estimable conduct—Private benefactions—Generosity—Effect of his example on his contemporaries—Powers of observation—Suffers from long field service—Interferes in behalf of the vanquished—Summary of the late wars—Favourable results—Progress through the Deccan—His civil policy—And municipal regulations—Prepares to leave India—Takes leave of the army.

WITH regard to the removal of the young princes of Mysore, the Governor-general was of opinion, that it could not be intrusted to any person more likely to combine every office of humanity, with the prudential precautions required, than Colonel Wellesley. He therefore committed to his discretion and activity, the whole arrangement, subject always to such suggestions as might be offered by the other commissioners. He desired that Colonel Wellesley, in his name, would give the

most unequivocal assurances of protection and indulgence to every part of the family of Tippoo ; and felt pursued that the humanity of General Harris would induce him to exert every effort to mitigate the rigorous parts of this necessary and most expedient revolution, so loudly called for by a due regard to British interests, and the welfare of the natives themselves.

The general subjugation of the Mysore, was the natural consequence of the fall of Seringapatam, and the death of the Sultan. The commission before appointed, now proceeded to the discharge of its important duties. The provinces which fell under British protection and authority, became a distinct command.* To this, Colonel Wellesley was appointed, with directions to make his reports to the Governor-general ; receiving his orders direct from the seat of the supreme government at Calcutta.

His first step was to make use of the intelligence and experience of those who had most faithfully served under the Sultan, and he restored them to their former posts and privileges. In his active superintendence, his punctuality and attention to the details of business, he showed himself fully competent to the discharge of his civil duties, while his strict impartiality and

* The author has examined with care and impartiality the different statements made by Colonel Gurwood, and those in the Life of Sir David Baird, by Mr. Hook, with reference to the appointment of Colonel Wellesley to the government of the town and fortress, to the supposed prejudice of General Baird. It would appear that some unpleasant feeling did undoubtedly exist ; complaints were made, and intemperate language in the heat of the moment, perhaps, employed. Yet far more importance has been given to the affair than it at all deserved. Instances of the kind, from collision of interests, must frequently occur in the rise and progress of military men, and which are passed over as they ought to be : it shows both bad taste and bad feeling to revive them. Moreover it is stated, that General Baird wished to withdraw his too warm expressions—a proof that the feeling was of a transitory kind. Besides, we perceive that he was subsequently appointed Colonel Wellesley's superior in command ; that Colonel Wellesley expressed his readiness to march under him, and acknowledged the very frank and handsome manner in which Baird had conducted himself towards him.

justice soon obtained for him the respect and gratitude of the conquered people.*

Thus upon application being made to him to grant permission for searching the seraglio, where it was believed that a quantity of jewels were concealed, he gave previous notice for the removal of the women to other apartments, during the execution of this novel and unpleasant duty. But nothing whatever of value was discovered; and it is said to have been subsequently ascertained, that Tippoo Sultan, so far from intrusting the ladies with his jewels, never permitted them the possession even of those which he called their own. It appeared, moreover, that including some part of the late Hyder Ali's family, the number of wives and other female inmates of the establishment, amounted to not less than six hundred and fifty belonging to the seraglio and the palace—a number that has been not unaptly compared to that of King Solomon himself. It is singular that in one of his subsequent despatches, the Governor-general, on being first acquainted with the affair, expressed his high displeasure that the search should have taken place at all. He declared that he could have wished for the honour of the British name, that the "Zenana" had not been disturbed. In the heat and confusion of an assault, indeed, he acknowledged that such excesses are sometimes unavoidable, but that he should ever lament that such a proceeding should have taken place long after the conflict had subsided.

* Several proofs of the regard in which his conduct was held, both by the natives and the soldiery, could be adduced. In May, 1800, whilst occupied in the command of the Mysore, Colonel Wellesley received a proposition from the Governor-general, to be united with Admiral Rainier, in the charge of an expedition, which the governor in obedience to the king's order, had planned against Batavia. The letter of the Governor-general, and the consequent correspondence (which as it led to no result, it would be idle to remark upon), fully explained the motives which induced Colonel Wellesley to decline the service proposed. When this decision, which secured his services in the Mysore, was made known, no slight satisfaction was publicly expressed by different classes in the capital.

He further enjoined, that if any personal ornaments, or other articles of value, were taken from the women in that unfortunate moment, he trusted that the commander-in-chief would make it his business to vindicate the humanity of the British nation, by using the most zealous exertions to obtain a full restitution of the property in question. It was added, that he thought it superfluous to hint his expectation, that the utmost degree of care would be taken to secure the personal property of the princes and the women, when the period of their removal should arrive.

In reply to his remonstrance the commissioners, on their part, begged to assure the Governor-general that they were most careful, previous to the examination of the zenana for the reported treasure, to prepare separate apartments for the ladies, and that no precaution was omitted to secure them from the possibility even of being subjected to the slightest inconvenience.

In other places, however, upwards of ten lacs of rupees' worth of jewels, and the amount of five hundred camel-loads of muslins, shawls, and rich cloths, with various kinds of merchandise, were found in the captors' prize.*

* The Sultan's throne, we are told, being too unwieldly to be conveyed away, was broken up. It consisted of a *howdah*, or armed seat, upon a tiger covered with sheet gold; the ascent was by silver steps, gilt; the canopy was equally superb, and decorated with a costly fringe of white pearls all around it. The eyes and teeth of the tiger were of glass; it was valued at 60,000 pagodas, or upwards of 25,000*l.* sterling. The sheet gold alone was estimated at 40,000 pagodas. Every inch of the howdah contained an Arabic inscription, chiefly from the Koran, and superbly stamped, being raised and polished in the most beautiful manner.

A gold figure of a bird, covered over with the most precious stones was fastened to the top of the canopy; its beak was a large emerald, its eyes were carbuncles, the breast was covered with diamonds. On its back were many large jewels, fancifully arranged, while the tail, made to resemble a peacock, was actually studded in the same manner. The whole was so formed, as to have the appearance of plumage, and so closely set, that the gold was hardly to be seen.

A number of tigers found in the palace-yard, were ordered to be shot, to prevent accidents.

A large portion of Tippoo Sultan's wealth, was derived from the plunder of the deposed family of Mysore, and a number of the inferior Rajahs; and he is stated to have spent much of his leisure time in taking inventories of his varied and splendid treasures, and arranging every article in the most exact order. His avarice and jealousy of power had led him to incarcerate his only brother Kerim Saheb, who was found with heavy irons on his hands and feet, *languishing in a dungeon.*

Having regulated the affairs of the capital, it was the commander-in-chief's next object, to disband the late Sultan's army, and to reduce the different towns and strongholds throughout the Mysore. It had been decided in council, to restore the ancient rajahship, and apportion a larger revenue and less extensive territory to the new dynasty. Other portions of the kingdom were to be divided between the English and their ally, the Nizam. The lineal descendant of the Hindoo princes, was discovered with his family in a state of abject poverty and humiliation, and upon beholding the commissioners enter their wretched abode, the heir of Mysore, a young prince, of scarcely five years, evinced the utmost alarm.

On being made acquainted with the purpose of the visit, however, explained to the family by Purneah, a faithful friend of their house, the Rana, or queen-mother, expressed the deep sense she entertained of British generosity in thus restoring her son to the high station from which, forty years before, his ancestors had been suddenly driven by tyranny and usurpation.*

Upon the 30th of June Colonel Wellesley, attended by the other commissioners, witnessed the ceremony of placing the

* Tippoo Sultaun had always designated the state as *Khodadad Sircar*—meaning the “government God given, or the gift of God.” The designation though Mahomedan, struck many as being singularly applicable to the advancement of the young Rajah, for he had literally lain among the pots, and was now set up as a prince of the people. There was a potter's heap close to his late wretched abode; and it is not less singular, that the young prince and his family were originally of the potter caste, one which, though not of the meanest, is by no means a high one.

young Rajah on the throne of his ancestors. The day had been selected by the Brahmins as the most auspicious for assuming the new sovereignty, and the coronation took place in the ancient town of Mysore, which was fixed upon for the royal residence, and the future seat of government. Three volleys of musketry from the troops on the spot, and a royal salute from the guns of Seringapatam, announced to the delighted throngs of spectators, the restoration of the young Rajah to his ancestral dominions. It was after these ceremonies, at which General Harris as senior commissioner had presided, that the following notice, dated, "Head-quarters, 11th of September, 1799," appeared in the general orders of the commander-in-chief of the Madras army :

"The Commander-in-chief being about to proceed to the Presidency, in obedience to the orders of the Governor-general in council, appoints Colonel the Hon. A. Wellesley to command the troops serving above the Ghauts." In a subsequent correspondence with Major afterwards Sir Thomas Munro, Colonel Wellesley gives an interesting account of his visits to the different provinces of the subjugated countries; of his opening communications, projecting roads, and organizing the entire civil, no less than the military establishments, upon a sound footing. "This country," he observes, "into which I am come to visit my posts on the Mahratta frontiers, is worse than that which you curse daily. It is literally not worth fighting for. Hereafter, it will be necessary to communicate with it from Canara, and I have desired the Amildar to make a good road from Soopah towards your borders.

"The drubbing that we gave to the Mahrattas lately, has had the best effects, and although all the robbers are in motion to cut each other's throats, they treated us with the utmost hospitality, and have sent back our people whom they had driven away."* The frank and lively tone in which these letters are written is not less remarkable, than the determination they

* Letters and Despatches, &c.

evince throughout, to root out those hordes of robbers by which the country was infested. (May 7th, 1800.) "Measures have been taken for collecting in Canara as many troops as Lieutenant-colonel Mignan will require; one battalion must come from Goa, if he wants it, and another from Malabar. It would not do to withdraw every thing from Goa; for, in that case, how is Soonda to be assisted, if it should be attacked? Not from Mysore, certainly, for we cannot get there during the rains. Not from Canara, where there are no troops but from Goa. Soonda appears a favourite place of yours, and it is extraordinary that you should not have provided for it, some way or other; and that you should not allow your Amildars to assist the paymasters in procuring provisions for the forts which are to be kept. I think that, upon the whole, we are not in the most thriving condition in this country. Poligars, Nairs, and Moplas in arms on all sides of us; an army full of disaffection and discontent, amounting to Lord knows what on the northern frontier, which increases as it advances, like a snow-ball in snow. To oppose this we have nothing that ought to be taken from the necessary garrisons, and the corps we have in them are incomplete in men, and without officers. If we go to war in earnest, however (and if we take the field at all, it ought to be in earnest), I will collect every thing that can be brought together from all sides, and we ought not to quit the field so long as there is a discontented or unsubdued Poligar in the country."*

The balance of power, however, from the period of the fall of Seringapatam was gradually turning in favour of the British; the whole kingdom of Mysore, with all its resources, was at the disposal of the Company; we could concentrate the most efficient part in one mass for the purpose of defence; the French were left without an ally; and with regard to augmentation of revenue there was an acquisition of upwards of two millions

* Despatches of the Duke of Wellington.

and a half, while the subsequent treaty with the Rajah furnished as much more. Deserred towns and villages were repeopled, the inhabitants enjoyed their former customs and privileges, and with British enterprise, and under British protection, the fertile district round Seringapatam resumed more than its usual appearance of cultivation and prosperity.

The army had long been anxious to offer to the Governor-general some tribute, expressive of their sense of his high worth and his admirable arrangements during the war. A star and badge of the order of St. Patrick, enriched with jewels taken from the treasury of Tippoo, were enclosed in a box of gold, and sent to General Harris, with a request that he would transmit them to Lord Mornington, in the name of the army. In his reply to the general, his lordship declared that he should have been proud to wear such an emblem of their glory and of their personal regard, but that on a careful examination of the subject, he had come to the conclusion that he could not accept their gift without violating the letter of existing statutes. Although it could never have been contemplated by the British legislature to prohibit the acceptance of honorary marks of distinction, yet here it might create a precedent which might hereafter become a source of detriment to the public service, which he hoped they would consider a sufficient ground for his declining so flattering a mark of their approbation.

At the same time, the distinguished services of the noble governor drew upon him the regard, and merited the thanks of the country. They were expressed through both houses of parliament, extending to all those connected with the brilliant results of the war; and as an additional mark of the high sense entertained of his deserts, he was raised by the favour of his sovereign to a marquise, and a British barony.

For a short period after the fall of Seringapatam, an interval of peace permitted Colonel Wellesley, not only to mature his plans for the Mysore government,* and to reap the reward of

* It is remembered that he early prepared a paper upon the state of the

his strenuous exertions in the approbation of his friends, and of the Company; but to prepare once more for active service. In the year 1800, a powerful freebooter, named Dhoondiah Waugh, had increased his force to such an extent as to threaten the peace of the British dominions, no less than the territories of the allies on the western borders. He had long before committed devastations on the territories of Tippeo Sultan, who succeeded in taking him captive, compelled him to conform to the Mohammedan faith, and subsequently employed him in his service. Suspecting his fidelity, however, he threw him into prison, where he was found by the British loaded with heavy irons, and with a number of other prisoners set at liberty. He immediately took to flight, accompanied by a number of Tippeo's soldiers; and gathering strength as he proceeded, laid the rich country of Bednore under contribution, and committed various acts of plunder and violence. A light corps of cavalry, under Colonel Dalrymple, had moved against him from Chittadroog; and another light corps under Colonel Stevenson, advanced into Bednore in another direction. Dhoondiah, nevertheless, effected his escape, with some loss, into the Mahratta territory, and the pursuit had here ceased; the Governor-general having strictly forbidden any violation of the Mahratta frontier.

So great was now his audacity, and the extent of his inroads, as to call loudly for the suppression of this predatory system. With his accustomed energy, the Governor-general resolved to remedy the evil, and instantly ordered an expedition to be set on foot, the command of which he confided to Colonel Wellesley. It consisted of a combined British and native force,

coinage in Mysore, in which it was shown that he had studied the subject, and was not less able to project a measure of finance in the closet, than to guide a column in the field. To this hour, indeed, the memory of all these services, and more particularly of those which he rendered to the terrified and desolate natives in the moment of our triumph, and their distress, is cherished by the aged inhabitants of Seringapatam with a grateful feeling, with which we are unwilling to disconnect the after successes of Colonel Wellesley's life.—*Sher's Military Memoirs, &c., i. 40.*

with which the colonel crossed the Malpoorba at Jellahaul, on the 3d of September, and entered the territories of the Nizam. Colonel Stevenson, at the head of a separate force, found himself unable to advance so speedily as he expected; and it appeared probable, that when Dhoondiah should be pressed by the whole of the force on the north side of the Doocab, he would return into Savanore, and thus impede the communication; or if favoured by the Patans of Kurnoul, and the Poligars on the right bank of the Toombuddra, he would pass that river, and would enter the territories of Mysore. Colonel Wellesley therefore determined to lead his detachment to the southward, and to prevent the execution of either of these designs, should he really entertain them. By pushing him again to the eastward, he hoped to take him at an advantage, while Colonel Stevenson should move by Moodgul and Moosky, at the distance of between twelve and twenty miles from the Kistna, and the Mahratta and Mogul cavalry then collected in one body, between the British force and the corps of the freebooters. To execute this plan, the Colonel arrived with his cavalry on the 8th at Buswapoer; on the following day he arrived at Yopalwerry, having the infantry at Huttu and Chinnoor, about fifteen miles in the rear. On the 9th, in the morning, Dhoondiah moved from Malgherry, a place about twenty-five miles from Rachoor, at which he had been encamped for some days, towards the Kistna; but on his road, having seen Colonel Stevenson's camp, he returned and sat down about nine miles in front of Colonel Wellesley's force; not aware of his near approach, and believing the British to be still at Chinnoor. On the 10th the Colonel advanced with his cavalry, and met Dhoondiah's army at a place called Conahgull, then on their march to the westward, apparently with the design of passing between the British and native detachments. His army consisted of upwards of 5000 cavalry, which were instantly attacked by Colonel Wellesley with his small force—the 19th and 25th dragoons, and the 1st and 2d regiments of native cavalry.

The robber-chief was drawn up in a very strong position,

near the village of Conahgull; and he stood the attack for some moments with apparent firmness. Such, however, was the rapidity and resolution with which Colonel Wellesley charged at the head of the British dragoons and the native horse, that Dhoondiah was instantly thrown into confusion; his lawless hordes broke their ranks, and fled on all sides, leaving the "king of the two worlds" himself among the slain.* His body was recognised, and immediately lashed upon one of the guns, and borne by the soldiers, as a well-earned trophy, to the English camp. Every thing he possessed fell into the hands of the victorious army; and so great was the terror inspired throughout the surrounding districts by this sudden and decisive action, that the marauding war was speedily brought to an end. There was no longer any apprehension for the safety of the country; for on the same day Colonel Stevenson came up with and completed the destruction of the flying bands; taking their two remaining guns, with a quantity of baggage, and numbers of camels and bullocks.

The correspondence of Colonel Wellesley throughout the whole of this wild predatory warfare, in which he describes his rapid movements, and the details of his operations, displaying at the same time his intimate knowledge of the native character, and the country, is highly interesting. From the amusing style, also, in which his pursuit of the "king of the two worlds" is related, it is evident that he did not attach much importance to the campaign in a military point of view.

"After I had crossed the Melpurba," he observes, "it appeared to me very clear, that if I pressed upon the "king of the two worlds," with my whole force on the northern side of the Dooab, his majesty would either cross the Toombuddra with the aid of the Patan chiefs, and would then enter Mysore; or he would return into Savanore, and play the devil with my peaceable communications."

* A son of Dhoondiah, about four years of age, was taken into Colonel Wellesley's tent, and most kindly and liberally provided for by him.

The result of this royal chase is characterized as follows :

" Thus has ended this warfare ; and I shall commence my march in a day or two towards my own country. An honest killadar of Chinnoor had written to the " king of the world " by a regular tappall, established for the purpose of giving him intelligence, that I was to be at Nowly on the 8th, and at Chinnoor on the 9th. His majesty was misled by this information, and was nearer me than he expected. The honest killadar did all he could to detain me at Chinnoor, but I was not to be prevailed upon to stop ; and even went so far as to threaten to hang a great man sent to show me the road, who manifested an inclination to show me a good road to a different place. My own and the Mahratta cavalry afterwards prevented any communication between his majesty and the killadar."*

It is pleasing to remark in the conduct of Colonel Wellesley, that thus early in his military career he was always ready and ever anxious to display the merit of officers, either when detached on a separate command, or under his own immediate orders. In the details of the foregoing action he gave the highest praise to the officers and men, and in particular to Colonel Stevenson, of whom he speaks in his report to the adjutant-general in the following terms :

" I attribute the opportunity which was given of destroying the enemy's army, to the movements of the detachment under Colonel Stevenson ; in no part of the army has there been greater exertion or more fatigue ; nor has it been more cheerfully borne : and I conceive Colonel Stevenson, Lieutenant-colonel Bowser, and the officers and troops under their orders, to be entitled to my approbation, and to the favourable report of their conduct which I now make to you."

To a young commander, capable of bringing a desultory and long-protracted warfare to so speedy and brilliant a close, and modestly awarding the chief merit to his colleagues, while describing his own bold and rapid movements in a light and

* Despatches, i. 71.

sportive manner, the thanks of the local government appear to have been justly due. In the public orders, the Governor-general in council took occasion to express to Colonel Wellesley, the high sense he entertained of the judicious arrangements made by him for the supply of his army, and of the distinguished ability manifested in those masterly dispositions, which had terminated in the discomfiture and utter defeat of the enemy. The patience, the zealous spirit, and the matchless bravery and discipline of the army which he led, were also dwelt upon with expressions of marked approbation, calculated to foster emulation and good conduct.

The manner in which the expedition against Dhoondiah Waugh had been conducted, was considered by the Marquis of Wellesley to have effectually removed any immediate danger which threatened the possessions of the Company; as well as of their allies and dependants in the peninsula of India. Meantime, tranquillity being restored, Colonel Wellesley had leisure to turn his attention to the internal affairs and municipal regulations of our new possessions in the Mysore. He had been extremely active in his visits to different points, and his intimate acquaintance with the plans of the Governor-general, and the views and interests of the Company, made his command of these provinces an object of importance, no less to the conquerors than to the people governed. In a letter to Major Munro (October, 1800) from the camp at Hoobly, and written in the same pleasant and often playful tone, which runs through most of his correspondence with his early friends, we learn that he was employed in arranging some details connected with the inland trade.

"I have been ordered by government to remain some time in this country; and I have come here in order to eat rice, which I propose to draw from the borders of Soonda, without using any brought from Mysore by my brinjarries.

"I fancy that you will have the pleasure of seeing some of your grand plans carried into execution; all that I can say is that I am ready primed, and that if all matters suit, I shall go off with

a dreadful explosion, and shall probably destroy some campoos and pultans, which have been indiscreetly pushed across the Kistna; that is to say, if the river remains full.

"I have written to Colonel Close about your money, which I shall want. The only reason why I cannot get it is, that you are obliged to keep enough in your hands to pay the troops in Canara, &c., till January. I have written to desire that a sum of money for that purpose may be sent round from Madras, in one of the ships of the squadron; and whatever sum I hear that they will send, I will draw an equal one from you; that is the only mode that occurs of procuring the supply of money which I shall want in December.*

It has been frequently observed, that from the outset of his career, a strong sense of duty formed a prominent trait in the character of Colonel Wellesley. The great advantage of this valuable quality in an officer, was not confined to himself; it held up an example which tended to make distinguished commanders of those in subordinate command, who had their eye upon him, and intelligence to appreciate his merits. He invariably gave his utmost attention to the orders which he received; he devoted himself with fixed resolution to the execution of them; and he expected the same promptness and spirit from those to whom he addressed his own. It was doubtless a knowledge of this characteristic firmness, and regard for strict discipline, which led the Governor-general to place implicit confidence in one, who though yet young in the service, had already evinced ability, deliberation, coolness, and decision far above his years, and another opportunity seemed now to present itself for again calling forth these qualities into active display.†

* Despatches, i. 12, Mysore.

† That we have not overrated the services he had recently performed in giving so decided a blow to the chief of the robber-hordes, and checking in time the growth of so great an evil, would appear from the united testimony of his various biographers, and all writers upon the affairs of India.

"Thus was tranquillity again restored," says Major Sherer, "to the territories lately acquired by the British, and also to many fertile districts

An expedition had for some time, been projected by the Governor-general against Batavia, and Colonel Wellesley was appointed to accompany General Baird, who was to act in concert with the admiral commanding in the Indian seas. Owing, however, to some want of understanding between the Marquis Wellesley and Admiral Rainier with regard to the precise powers invested in the former, the necessary co-operation could not be obtained to carry this well-conceived enterprise into effect. That an undertaking, so intimately connected with our British interests in India, should thus early have been frustrated, when the troops were collected, and every thing promised a fortunate result, was greatly to be regretted. Colonel Wellesley was restored to his command in the Mysore, and General Baird with a part of the force, amounting to five thousand men, was ordered to proceed up the Red Sea to Egypt, in order to act with the army there under General Abercromby, in his campaign against the French.

From the correspondence which took place between the Governor-general and Colonel Wellesley upon this subject, it is clear that both felt a lively interest in the prosecution of the enterprise, and that the active mind of the latter was busied in suggesting plans, and making the most judicious arrangements for the new campaign. He proceeded in December to Trincomalee, from which place he entered on a long and spirited correspondence, going into the minutest details,—addressed both to the Governor-general and to Lord Clive.

Among the instructions given by the Governor-general to Colonel Wellesley, it is observed, that he had judged it expedient, under the circumstances, to appoint Major-general Baird to the chief command of the expedition against Batavia; and to appoint the Colonel second in command on that expedition. It is further stated, that the chief command of the expedition

immediately beyond the frontier. Their peaceful peasants could again sow and irrigate their pleasant fields in security; and in 'the places of drawing water,' the timid women of the Indian villages were again delivered from their fear." Vol. i., p. 47.

against the Isle of France would be intrusted to the Colonel with the same powers, and under the same restrictions, with which he was furnished by the Governor-general's despatch on the 6th of December, 1800. It also appears, that all the instructions and despatches addressed to the Colonel, relative to the two expeditions, were directed to be communicated, by the latter, to Admiral Rainier, and to Major-general Baird, doubtless with a view to obtaining the valuable advice and suggestions of one whose mind was so ardently engaged in the subject, for the future operations of his colleagues. So prompt, indeed, was he in his measures, and so energetic in all his actions, that, to promote the objects of the Company, at the period of which we are speaking, he left the island of Ceylon with the troops, and proceeded towards Bombay, without awaiting the arrival of General Baird.

The whole transaction in itself, forms apparently so singular and unexpected a departure, in one sensitive to a high degree on the score of discipline, from the strict rules of military subordination and etiquette that we should have been at a loss to perceive motives sufficiently strong for such a step, had he not fortunately, in a letter to General Baird, given a full statement of his motives. The whole of this letter, for reasons we have already assigned, is so interesting that it will be proper, in justice to both these distinguished characters, to give it to the reader entire.

"On board H.M.S. Suffolk, Feb. 21, 1801.

"My dear General,

"I have just received a letter from Lord Wellesley, dated the 24th of January, by which I am informed that you are appointed to take the command of the body of troops which have been hitherto under my orders; that you were likely to leave Calcutta for Trincomalee towards the end of the month, and that the object was an expedition against the Dutch settlement in Java. You will probably be much surprised to find that I have

left the island of Ceylon with the troops, and have gone towards Bombay, and I write you this letter to explain the motives which urged me to take this step, without waiting for orders from the Governor-general.

"On the 7th of February I received from the governor of Fort St. George a copy of a letter from Mr. Dundas to Lord Wellesley, dated the 6th of October, calling for the co-operation of a body of troops from India in an attack upon Egypt. As the troops were collected in Ceylon, partly with a view of answering this call, I conceived it to be my duty to proceed immediately towards the rendezvous pointed out by Mr. Dundas, and I go to Bombay because I understand that it will not materially retard the arrival of the fleet in the Red Sea; because I know that the troops are in want of provisions, which can be furnished at Bombay only, and because I am desirous of receiving the orders of the Governor-general, before I proceed finally to the Red Sea.

"In my opinion the letter from Mr. Dundas, which I have above mentioned, will make a considerable alteration in the plan which the Governor-general had on the 24th of January; and that he will, in consequence, be obliged either to relinquish the attack upon Batavia entirely, or to provide another body of troops for that purpose. I therefore proceed on my voyage, notwithstanding that I have received his orders of the 24th of January.

"It is true that the number of European troops called for in Egypt is not equal to that which I have with me at present, although the number of natives is greater; and I might immediately send back to Trincomalee some of the European troops, in order to give Lord Wellesley an opportunity of sending both expeditions if he should think it proper. Upon this last notion I must observe, that I do not think it probable that he will wish to send both expeditions; if he should wish it, I shall know it on my arrival at Bombay, from the tenour of his orders to Mr. Duncan, and I can immediately send back to Ceylon the

troops which it may be intended to employ upon the expedition to Batavia. These will arrive at Ceylon long before the period for sailing will come round.

"As I before observed to you, I do not think it probable that Lord Wellesley would wish to send both expeditions ; he will send that to Egypt only ; and, as I know that it was his intention to give you the command of this body of troops, in case they should go to Egypt, I recommend you to come to Bombay and take the command of them without loss of time. If Lord Wellesley should determine to send both expeditions, and if he should wish that you should command that to Batavia, you will be with the troops which must go on that service. On the other hand, if he should determine to send troops to Egypt only, you will be late unless you proceed to Bombay immediately."

Major-general Baird embarked for the port of Trincomalee to make preparations for his expedition into Egypt, and the Governor-general also wrote to him, apprizing him of the motives which had induced Colonel Wellesley to proceed to Bombay with the troops from Ceylon.

On the 3d of March, 1801, the Colonel received a letter from Marquis Wellesley, enclosing an extract from a despatch which had just arrived from the Duke of York, stating, that having the pleasure of knowing personally Colonel Wellesley, he was thoroughly acquainted with his merits, and that his lordship might rest assured of the satisfaction he should feel in laying his name before his majesty, to be placed upon the staff in the East Indies, as soon as his standing in the army should admit of his being promoted to the rank of major-general.

However gratifying this intelligence, as a mark that his services were duly appreciated, it would appear from the subsequent correspondence between the Governor-general and his brother, that the period intervening between the recal of the latter from his command in the Mysore to serve in the expedition of General Baird, and his restoration to that command in the

ensuing year, was the least satisfactory to himself which he had passed in India. The difficulties which, after all the preparations for the expedition to Batavia, proved to be insurmountable,—the repeated delays, the long-protracted correspondence without any results, with the want of proper unanimity, and of active and vigorous measures, were at once perplexing and harassing to a strong and ardent mind. During his command in the Mysore, his energies had been actively employed both in a military and civil capacity; his great exertions had been crowned with utility and success; his conduct had raised him high in the opinion of the inhabitants, of the public functionaries, and of the army, and his name was only held in dread by freebooters and robbers—the spoliators of peaceful villages. He had now the mortification to perceive that his various plans and suggestions, with all the arrangements connected with the new expedition, in which he was to serve, were wholly thrown away, and that with his utmost efforts, and best intentions to promote it,—he, of all men, who at all hours and seasons had been most strict in adhering to orders, had, in what he conceived to be the most intelligent discharge of his duty, subjected himself to misinterpretation, if not to the censure of his superiors. What his views and feelings were, at this time, will best appear in his own words, in the following correspondence with the Governor-general, and from which it will further be seen, that from the first, this untoward project of attacking the Dutch settlements had been productive only of disappointment or dissatisfaction to all parties concerned.

Colonel the Hon. A. Wellesley, to the Governor-general.

“Bombay March, 23, 1801.

“My Lord,

“1. The letters which I have received since my arrival at this place give me reason to apprehend, that neither my departure from Ceylon, nor my coming here, have been approved by your excellency.

“2. Although my address of the 9th of February, with its

enclosures, stated the outlines of the reasons which induced me to take those steps, without waiting for your excellency's orders, I am induced to enter again into further details of them, in order, if possible, to remove an impression which has given me great uneasiness; or, at least, to prove that I acted upon the most mature deliberation, and did what I thought best for the service, and most likely to be agreeable to you.

"3. I always considered that your excellency's intentions were, that I should attend to the intelligence which I should receive from Bombay, of a call from Europe for the co-operation of a force from this country, in an attack upon the French in the Red Sea, which you foresaw would be made; and, that even the expedition upon which you ordered that I should proceed, at the end of December,* was to be relinquished, in case intelligence came of a call for co-operation in the Red Sea.

"4. Upon this point I must observe, that the government of Fort St. George conceived that I ought to proceed towards the rendezvous pointed out by Mr. Secretary Dundas, when they sent me the copies of the despatches, as appears by their Secretary's letter of the 1st of February, a copy of which has already been laid before your excellency; that the government of Bombay expected that I should proceed towards it, and therefore did not send the troops which they had in preparation; and, that the governor of Ceylon conceived that I ought to proceed towards it, and urged me repeatedly in the strongest manner, to lose no time previous to my departure.

"5. I received the despatches of the Secretary of State on the 7th of February, and I knew that your excellency could not receive them till about the same day. If I had waited at Trincomalee, and you had written me your orders immediately, I should not have received them by post till the 3d or 4th of March, and at that time† the stock of provisions for the troops would have been reduced to one, for three months.

* The contemplated attack upon Java.

† Were any additional testimony required of the admirable skill, the calculation, and timely foresight which particularly distinguished the arrangements for his campaigns, of this truly great commander, it might be adduced

"6. I consulted with Captain Malcolm regarding the passage to the Red Sea, the season, and the line which it would be the most proper to follow. He was of opinion that no time ought to be lost; that it would be necessary to proceed up the coast as far as the Vingorla rocks, before the fleet could go to the westward; and that to go to Bombay, would not create a material delay.

"Upon this opinion I founded my plan, and determined to sail, as soon as a vessel loaded with military stores, then expected, should arrive from Madras.

"7. The only doubt I had upon my mind, was whether I should take from Ceylon more than one regiment of Europeans, and the battalion of sepoys, and trust to the preparations at Bombay for the remainder of the equipment. But, although the governments of Fort St. George and Bombay had been ordered to have troops in readiness in case I should want them, I was ignorant of the resources of the latter, and I did not believe that they would be able to furnish the troops which have been sent to the Red Sea; and therefore I took with me the whole of the force for which I had tonnage, knowing, that if your excellency should wish that some of the troops should be employed upon another service, and should return to Ceylon, they would be there in good time.

"8. I determined to go to Bombay, because, when I sailed from Trincomalee, I had provisions for only three and a half months, and I knew by your letter of the 1st of December, 1800, that it was your opinion that the troops ought not to go to the Red Sea with a smaller quantity than for six months. I was very anxious to receive your excellency's orders, which would reach me at Bombay; and, as I have above stated, I was informed by Captain Malcolm, that as the fleet would be obliged to go as far north as the Vingorla rocks, the passage to Mocha was not likely to be materially delayed by putting into Bombay

in this particular instance; when yet a colonel, preparing to act in a subordinate command, and yet making himself thus minutely acquainted with details in this essential department, sometimes not to be found in a commissary-general himself,—how much less frequently in a commander-in-chief!

to receive the supply of provisions, which I had requested Mr. Duncan to prepare.

"9. I have thus laid before your excellency the grounds upon which I conceived myself obliged to come to a decision, when I received the despatches of the Secretary of State, and those upon which I determined to sail immediately with all the troops for which I had tonnage, and to go to Bombay; and I now proceed to state the reasons for which I have persisted in that determination, notwithstanding the receipt of subsequent advices from you and Mr. Duncan.

"10. When I was off Cape Comorin, I received your excellency's orders of the 24th of January, in which you inform me that you have appointed Major-general Baird to the command of the troops, and that you intend to send them on an expedition to Batavia. I was certain that you had not received the despatches of the Secretary of State, when you wrote that letter; I knew that you must depend for the expedition to the Red Sea upon some of the troops which had been, till then, under my orders; and, as I did not know what might be your wishes after you should have received the despatches, I determined to proceed according to my original plan; and I despatched a letter to Major-general Baird at Trincomalee, to apprise him of my motives. If your excellency had determined to carry on both the expeditions, the troops for that for Batavia would have been at Ceylon, before the season for sailing would have come round, and if you determined to carry on only that to the Red Sea, they would be at Bombay collected for that purpose.

"11. I received a letter from Mr. Duncan on the 16th inst., in which he enclosed a copy of a letter from Lieutenant-colonel Kirkpatrick, dated the 7th of February, and informed me that General Baird was to command the expedition to the Red Sea. Notwithstanding the contents of the enclosure, I did not know till then of the intention to despatch from Bengal any of the vessels loaded with provisions, mentioned by Mr. Secretary

Barlow. At that time I was so near Bombay, that I was induced to adhere to my original plan. The intelligence received from Mr. Duncan did not state what your excellency's intentions were regarding the proposed expedition to Batavia; although Mr. Duncan informed me that Major-general Baird was appointed to command the expedition to the Red Sea. It was, therefore, necessary that I should come here to receive your orders. The fleet was in want of water, which could not be procured at any port to the southward of the Vingorla rocks, on account of the want of conveniences for that purpose, without losing more time than was likely to elapse while it was coming to Bombay, and the troops in general wanted refreshments. The 10th regiment in particular had become sickly from having been so long on board ship, living on salt provisions, and has lost men.

"12. Since my arrival here, I have perused your lordship's instructions to Major-general Baird, and your despatches to the Governor of Bombay; and I perceive that I have anticipated your wishes in bringing from Ceylon all the troops for which I had tonnage. I imagine that I should have incurred your disapprobation to a great degree, if I had not taken steps to ensure the receipt of your excellency's orders before the final departure of the troops for Mocha; and I certainly could not have received them—the ships would have gone ill-supplied with water, and the troops in want of refreshments which no other place can afford, if I had not come to Bombay.

"13. Having thus explained all the motives which urged me to depart from Ceylon, and come here, I beg to observe that, notwithstanding the unexpected length of the passage hitherto, it is probable that the fleet will be at Mocha sooner than it would have been, had I waited at Trincomalee for your excellency's orders, and certainly better refreshed and supplied with water and provisions. But whatever may be your excellency's determination upon my conduct, I hope that you will give me credit for having maturely considered the points upon which I

had to decide, and for having had an earnest and zealous desire to forward the service in view, and to give it the full benefit of your excellency's foresight in collecting the troops in Ceylon.

" 14. The whole of the fleet is not yet come in; but as the ships arrive, I will take care that they shall be despatched as soon as they receive their water. All the arrangements are made for putting the provisions in the ships, and your lordship may depend upon it that not a moment shall be lost.*

" I have the honour to be, &c.,

" ARTHUR WELLESLEY."

At no period of his life are the letters written by the Duke of Wellington more interesting or more valuable, as exhibiting his high feeling, his frankness, and his strength of character, than at that of which we are now speaking. There is an earnestness and sincerity in their tone, which showed the simplicity and manliness of his mind; while they are imbued throughout with a spirit of truth and energy, a loftiness and decision of purpose, combined with that ardour of enterprise and love of distinction, which must vanquish every obstacle, and eventually command success.

Besides displaying the motives by which he was actuated, the projects he had in view, and the details in which he was engaged, his correspondence with his brothers, in particular, is rendered more attractive, as a transcript of his life and feelings, by the confidence of fraternal friendship, and the natural frankness of the writer.

The following, which belongs peculiarly to this class, is at the same time so happily illustrative of his views and feelings at this interesting period of his career, as to induce us to give the whole in his own language.

* Despatches.

To the Hon. H. Wellesley.

"Bombay, March 23, 1801.

"My dear Henry,

"I have received your note of the 3d of March, but none of your other letters, which you say that you have written to me. I hope that you received those which I wrote to you while you were in England, giving an account of how we were going on in this country. I enclosed them to the Doctor, and desired him to destroy those which should arrive subsequent to your departure, on your return to this country; so that some of them, written lately, you will probably never see. I was very anxious about you, as you must have come from the Cape in the track of the French privateers, homeward bound; and you were longer on your passage than we had reason to expect you would be.

"I have written a long letter to government this day, about my departure from Ceylon, which I hope will explain every thing. Whether it does or not, *I shall always consider these expeditions* as the most unfortunate circumstances for me, in every point of view, that could have occurred; and as such I shall always lament them.

"I was at the top of the tree in this country; the governments of Fort St. George and of Bombay, which I had served, placed undiminished confidence in me, and I had received from both strong and repeated marks of their approbation. Before I quitted the Mysore country, I arranged the plan for taking possession of the ceded districts, which was done without striking a blow; and another plan of conquering Wynaad, and reconquering Malabar; which I am informed has succeeded without loss on our side. But this supercession has ruined all my prospects, founded upon any service that I may have rendered. Upon this point, I must refer you to the letters written to me, and to the governor of Fort St. George in May last, when an expedition to Batavia was in contemplation; and to those written to the governments of Fort St. George, Bombay, and Ceylon; and to the admiral, Colonel Champagné, and myself, when the troops were assembled in Ceylon. I then ask you,

has there been any change whatever of circumstances, that was not expected when I was appointed to the command? If there has not (and no one can say there has, without doing injustice to the Governor-general's foresight), my supercession must have been occasioned, either by my own misconduct, or by an alteration of the sentiments of the Governor-general. I have not been guilty of robbery or murder, and he has certainly changed his mind; but the world, which is always good-natured towards those whose affairs do not exactly prosper, will not, or rather does not, fail to suspect that both, or worse, have been the occasion of my being banished, like General Kray, to my estate in Hungary. I did not look, and did not wish for the appointment which was given to me; and I say that it would probably have been more proper to give it to somebody else; but when it was given to me, and a circular written to the governments on the subject, it would have been fair to allow me to hold it till I did something to deserve to lose it.

“I put private considerations out of the question, as they ought and have had no weight in causing either my original appointment or my supercession. I am not quite satisfied with the manner in which I have been treated by government upon the occasion. However, I have neither lost my health, spirits, nor temper in consequence thereof.

“But it is useless to write any more upon a subject of which I wish to retain no remembrance whatever.

“I enclose a memorandum upon the subject of Trincomalee, which will point out to you the inconveniences of that port as one of rendezvous or equipment: you will find it of use in the next expeditions. Remember also, that it is difficult for ships to get round Ceylon in the south-west monsoon, after the middle of March.

“Yours most affectionately,
“ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

“The Hon. Henry Wellesley.”

It will be seen from this letter, that Colonel Wellesley took a lively interest in the success of the expeditions; and it was his opinion that Sir Ralph Abercromby, having already commenced his operations in Egypt, should receive reinforcements with as little delay as possible. He even expressed a desire to create a diversion in his favour with the troops then on the Red Sea, without awaiting the arrival of General Baird; conceiving it of the utmost importance, at that moment, to encourage the Mamelukes in Upper Egypt to rise against the French. He was prepared to sacrifice his hopes of being restored to the command of the Mysore, and to serve as second in command, from his sense of public duty; when he received a communication from the Governor-general, informing him of the arrival of General Baird to take the command of the troops, and that circumstances rendered it expedient, that instead of joining the expedition, he should himself resume his command in the Mysore.

But on the 25th of March, 1801, before he had received this intelligence, Colonel Wellesley was seized with a fever of the intermittent kind, which prevented his putting in execution the intention he then had of going immediately to the Red Sea.*

This sudden illness, attended with a violent eruption, which probably saved his life, left him exceedingly weak, and affected by another disorder, of which, he observes, that the medical men there appeared not to know the nature, but which made it advisable that he should seek a cool climate. This circumstance, together with the probability that Sir Ralph Abercromby would postpone his attack upon Lower Egypt, and the operations on the Red Sea be relinquished, induced him to come to the determination of remaining in India. At the same time, he considered it as an act of justice to General Baird to state, that the general's conduct towards him had by no means occasioned that determination, but that it had been perfectly kind and satisfactory; an

* Despatches.

acknowledgment as creditable to Colonel Wellesley, as it must have been gratifying to the brave and high-minded Baird. He further observed, that he hoped matters would now proceed satisfactorily; that he had been a slave to the expedition till that moment, notwithstanding he was sick. They had thenceforward, he added, only to take care of what they had got, till the operations on shore commenced; and he had given the general his opinion fully in writing upon this part of the subject.*

Not satisfied, however, with this explanation of his motives to the government, he addressed a letter to General Baird,† in which he freely acknowledges that his regret at being prevented from accompanying him, had been greatly increased by the kind, candid, and handsome manner in which the general had behaved towards him. “I need not,” he adds, “enter further into this subject, than to entreat that you will not attribute my stay to any other motive, than that to which I have above assigned it; and to inform you, that as I know what has been said and expected by the world in general, I propose, as well for my own credit as for yours, to make known to my friends and to yours, not only the distinguished manner in which you have behaved towards me, but the causes which have prevented my demonstrating my gratitude, by giving you every assistance in the arduous service which you have to conduct.

“I must stay here as long as the season will permit, and then I propose to go round to Madras, and if I cannot get well, I believe I must try a cold climate.”‡

In this letter, offering so noble a testimony to the conduct of General Baird, Colonel Wellesley likewise enclosed an able and important paper on the operations in the Red Sea; a document which showed at once the extent of his information and the soundness of his judgment. The interest he thus took in the success of a commander, under whose orders he expressed his readiness to serve, and to abandon his own views for the bene-

* Despatches. † Dated, Bombay, April 9, 1801. ‡ Despatches, i. 90.

fit of the public service, presents another example of that self-command and strong sense of duty, which ceased not to actuate Colonel Wellesley in every circumstance of his life. In the same frank and manly spirit, he wrote to his friend Colonel Champagné,* expressing his entire ignorance of the circumstances which had caused his removal from the command of the troops. He concluded, however, that the Governor-general had found that he could not resist the claims that General Baird had to be employed, stating at the same time, that he always thought that General Baird had not been well used, when he himself was called to the command. Yet he did not for that reason think it proper, that he should be disappointed more than the general was, in order that the latter might have no ground of complaint. "Lord Wellesley," he adds, "allowed me to return to my old situation, but said that he should regret my doing so; and for this reason, and because I saw in the general the most laudable intention to allow me to render him the services I could, I determined to proceed upon the expedition. I was, however, seized with a fever, and a breaking out all over my body; and here I am under a course of nitrous baths for a cure. When I shall be well, God knows! but in the mean time, I cannot join the armament."

"I see clearly the evil consequences of all this to my reputation and future views; but it cannot be helped, and to things of that nature I generally contrive to make up my mind."†

The return of Colonel Wellesley to Seringapatam, and the command of the Mysore, took place in the month of May, 1801. During his absence, Colonel Stevenson had directed the operations of the forces, and carried on the war in Malabar and Canara with such signal success, as to obtain for him the thanks of the Governor-general in council, and the appointment to the special command of those provinces, under the orders of the officer commanding in Mysore.

* From Bombay, April 9, 1801.

† Despatches.

One of the first objects of that officer, was to prepare those important memoranda for the consideration of the council, upon the state of Seringapatam, and the operations in the Mahratta territory,—admirable state documents, which can be read by no one, capable of judging upon the subject, without feeling increased respect for the talents of the writer.

During the whole of the ensuing year, he was as actively engaged in organizing the civil and military administration of the extensive territory over which he presided, and of which it will be seen that he gave a detailed account to the Governor-general at a subsequent period.

Always zealous in the performance of those duties which he took upon himself, and equal to every emergency, he had already, in addition to his military employments, filled the part of an able diplomatist, and placed the civil department of his government on a sound and equitable footing.

In the new scene that now opened before him, he soon gained that experience, that valuable knowledge, both as a general and a statesman, which made his future life so distinguished in a wider and more important sphere. His promotion, therefore, was necessarily rapid; he was raised to the rank of Brigadier-general, in the expedition to Egypt; and on the 29th of April, 1802, he attained to that of Major-general.

Before, however, describing the incidents of the great Mahratta war, it will render the narrative more intelligible if we take a rapid view of the peculiar position of the country, and of the predatory chiefs, by whose continual intrigues and usurpations it became a prey to discord and every species of suffering.* The chief founder of an empire so extensive, and which increased so rapidly, was the famous Sevajee sprung from the

* Hindostan Proper lies to the north of the Nerbudda river,—the Deccan between the Nerbudda and the Kistna, while the Carnatic, Malabar, and the kingdom of Mysore are situated to the south of the Kistna.

The Mahrattas, a bold and ferocious tribe, extended their conquests north and south of the Nerbudda, and held the various states overrun by them under their predatory sway. It extended from Delhi, on the northern

Rajahs of Chittoor, among the most ancient of the Hindoo princes. Upon succeeding to the Rajahship of Settarah, he overthrew the veteran armies of the Great Mogul, Aurungzebe, drove back the forces of the Portuguese, and established a powerful monarchy in the various Mahratta provinces. His son, a weak prince, ruled only by the authority of his minister, Bellajee, who became Peshwah or chief magistrate; and so far consolidated his power as to make the office hereditary, and handed it down to his son. Bajee Rao, proceeding another step, usurped the government; while the Rajah and his descendants, with the empty title of sovereigns, remained close prisoners in their own palace at Settarah.

The new Peshwah, having gained the adherence of the military chieftains, established his capital at Poonah, surrounding himself with a court and all the honours and dignities of royalty. Other military chiefs having followed his example, although they still professed to acknowledge him as the representative of the Rajah, the Mahratta empire became gradually divided into independent states, governed by five chiefs or princes.

Among these, the most powerful, perhaps at the period of which we are about to speak, were Dowlut Rao Scindiah, and

extremity, to the river Toombuddra on the southern, nearly a thousand miles.

In this vast tract were comprehended the provinces of Delhi, Agra, Assi-nure, Malwa, Guzerat, Candeish, Baglana, Visiapoore, the Konkan, Berar, Cuttack, and Doulatabad. Portions of these were very fertile and populous, being strewn with towns and villages; they yielded abundance of grain, and were enriched by commerce. The entire population of the Mahratta territory has been estimated at not less than forty millions, consisting of various nations and tribes, out of which nearly nine-tenths were Hindoos, and the remainder Mahomedans. This formidable empire was divided, however, amongst five chiefs, united in a general confederacy, subject at the same time to one acknowledged head, called the Peshwah. But frequently the policy of a common union and defence gave way to rival interests, and the ambition of particular chieftains—whose combined forces, amounting to more than two hundred thousand cavalry, and half as many infantry, must have proved, with discipline and subordination, not a little formidable.

Rao Holkar, both of whom had been in the service of the Peshwah. Encouraged by former examples, Scindiah openly usurped the government of Poonah, and established himself with a powerful army, chiefly headed by French officers, in the vicinity. He had thus rendered nugatory the exertions of Lord Cornwallis to secure the British interest, by drawing closer the ties of alliance with the Peshwah; nor was his influence less felt by the Marquis of Wellesley, on his first assuming the government, when he attempted to avail himself of the subsisting alliance with the Peshwah against the Sultan of Mysore. Many of the Mahratta chiefs, regardless of this treaty, and their fealty to their acknowledged head, had maintained a secret correspondence with Tippoo; and, under the control of Scindiah, had attempted to excite fresh hostilities against the English. The Governor-general, on his side, had sought to thwart their views by offers of an amicable nature, both to Scindiah and the Peshwah, and by ceding a portion of Tippoo's dominions to the Mahrattas, offers which were rejected at the instigation of Scindiah, who, calculating on the support of the French, seized the government of Poonah, the capital of the Mahratta empire, and thus compelled the Peshwah himself to violate his compact with the British Company.

Subsequent events, as we have seen, had rendered us, with the exception of the Mahratta power, masters of all India. We had cemented our alliances with the Nizam, and we had no longer a rival to dread, if the union of the Mahratta chiefs, under some enterprising leader, should not again provoke a war. To obviate this danger, the Governor-general, in pursuance of the subsidiary treaty with the Peshwah and the Nizam, endeavoured to extend it to the Mahratta chiefs, and it was actually put in force with the Gwickwar, by attaching that state to the British colonies, and by securing an important territorial establishment in the populous maritime province of Guzerat. The tendency, however, of this politic measure to subvert the Mahratta confederacy, was, in some measure, counteracted by the efforts of France to attain its favourite

object of establishing colonies in India. Pondicherry, &c. had been previously established as a new colony. With this view, a considerable force had been placed at the disposal of a French adventurer, named Perron, who had succeeded in obtaining the command of some extensive districts on the left bank of the Indus, which brought a revenue of nearly two millions sterling. There were now only a few British officers in the service of Scindiah, and the Frenchman was anxiously waiting the arrival of more of his countrymen to dismiss these few entirely from his service. He had indeed usurped the entire authority of the Mogul Emperor, the unfortunate Shah Allum, whom he held in the most abject subjection. And thus, while the Peshwah enjoyed the empty title of Viceroy, Scindiah, as his deputy, exercised the real power throughout the Mogul empire; while, in a similar manner, the great adventurer Perron gave his army the appellation of "the imperial army," humbly designating himself as a servant and subject (though the real master) of the Great Mogul.*

* The adventures of M. Perron were not a little extraordinary, and would supply admirable materials, either for a comedy or a romance. He went out to India as a midshipman during the American war, where he served first under Suffrein. Not relishing a sea life, he travelled into the upper provinces, and entered into the service of the Rana of Gohud; while in this service, on a small salary, he married Mademoiselle Deridan, sister of an officer whose family resided at Pondicherry. He next entered the service of Scindiah, as quartermaster-sergeant, on the pay of sixty rupees a month, and in a corps commanded by M. Lostoneaux. When Ghulam Khadir was taken prisoner, Lostoneaux was believed to have got possession of the saddle in which that chief had concealed all the valuable jewels plundered from the palace of Delhi. With this he made his escape to Europe, and having also taken the money for the payment of his corps, M. Pillet, whom he had left in charge of them, being unable to satisfy the demands of the soldiery, had nearly lost his life.

After the escape of Lostoneaux, Perron received the command of a battalion from Rana Khan, Scindiah's general, but being reduced on the return of the army into cantonments, he was left without employ until the arrival of General De Boigne, who, forming a brigade in Scindiah's service, gave Perron the command of the Burhampoor battalion. Subsequently he succeeded De Boigne in the command, and greatly distinguished himself in the various operations of Scindiah's army.

Under the combined influence of French intrigue and Mahratta power, the unfortunate Emperor became a mere instrument in the hands of his employers; and it was not till 1802, that the Marquis Wellesley, taking advantage of the unsettled state of Poonah, succeeded in strengthening the bonds of alliance with the Peshwah. At that period, Holkar, a bold adventurous chief, advanced against Poonah, and compelled Scindiah, at the head of the Peshwah's forces, to give him battle. Holkar proving victorious, the Peshwah sought the protection of the British Company; and having fled from his dominions, was conveyed in an English ship to the strong fortress of Severn Droog, on the coast of Malabar. There he readily consented to the terms of a new treaty, engaging him to receive a subsidiary force, to cede territories sufficient for its support, and to discharge all foreign adventurers from his service. In support of these stipulations, the government of Madras, without waiting for instructions from the Governor-general, assembled an army of 19,000 men on the north-west frontier of Mysore, under the command of Lieutenant-general Stuart. The government of Bombay was no less active in preparing a large disposable force, and, by the exertions of the British resident with the Peshwah, the force at Hyderabad was in equal readiness to take the field.

The residents now at the courts of the native princes were men of the highest ability, who most ably seconded the views of the Governor-general, and whose selection for so responsible a trust did great credit to his lordship's judgment. Lord Clive, moreover, was governor of Fort St. George, Mr. Dundas presided over Bombay, and to the admirable measures of both for promoting the rapid and brilliant successes which followed, the great leader of the expedition, in conjunction with General Stuart, was eager to express how much he was indebted on this and every occasion.*

* To those only who are unacquainted with Indian history will it be necessary to mention the names of some of the distinguished diplomatic agents, whose combined talents at this eventful period assisted the military successes

On the 27th of February, 1803, orders were received for the British troops to prepare for their march into the Mahratta territory. The extensive local knowledge and personal influence of General Wellesley at once pointed him out as the most efficient commander to conduct the active operations of the war. The high opinion entertained of his talents by the Marquis Wellesley, was that also of the most able and experienced military men, and Lord Clive expressed his confidence that the important trust could not be confided to any one with greater prospects of advantage.

At the head, therefore, of a detached corps of more than 12,000 men, composed of native and British troops, General Wellesley, having advanced to the Toombuddra, directed his march upon Poonah. Supported by the subsidiary force of the Deccan, he advanced rapidly, having received intelligence on his route that Amrut Rao, a chief of Holkar's, had determined on plundering the city before his arrival. With that spirit and perseverance which afterwards so greatly distinguished him, he at once made a forced march of sixty miles within thirty hours, and on the 20th of April, entered the capital with his cavalry, the Mahrattas flying before him, ere they had time to execute their nefarious intent.*

of Generals Lake and Wellesley, in the extraordinary aggrandizement, and successful administration of the British empire in India by the Marquis Wellesley.

The residents of the different courts south of the Nerbudda, in 1803 and 1804, were Lieutenant-colonel Close, with the Peshwah at Poonah; Lieutenant-colonel Collins, with Dowlut Rao Scindiah; Major Kirkpatrick, with the Nizam at Hyderabad; Mr. Webbe, first at Mysore, and afterwards appointed to the Durbar of the Rajah of Berar, but who died in Scindiah's camp at the end of 1804; and Major Malcolm, who accompanied Major-general Wellesley to Poonah, and on the removal of Mr. Webbe to the court of Nagpoor, became resident at Mysore. The Honourable Mount-Stuart Elphinstone, Mr. Wilks, and Major Munro, employed at this period in the Deccan and the Mysore, were also constellations in that galaxy of worth which shone so conspicuously in the government of India under Lord Wellesley.—*Gurwood's Despatches*, vol. i., p. 91.

* The climate and season considered, this was a prodigious exertion for the European part of his force; indeed, for all. It is remarkable, however,

The portion of General Wellesley's correspondence with the Governor, relating to this campaign, is so interesting, and at the same time so spirited and comprehensive, that it will be proper to give it in his own words.

“Camp of Karisgy upon the Werdah,
13th of March, 1803.

“ My Lord,

“ You will be anxious to hear from me as soon as possible after I have entered the Mahratta territory, and I lose no time in writing to you. I crossed the river Toombuddra at Havanoor yesterday, and marched to this river, and made another march towards Savanore this day. We have been very well received by the inhabitants of the country ; the villages are all full, and the camp is well supplied with forage and provisions. I have no doubt whatever but that I shall be able to bring forward, for the service of the Peshwah, all the jaghirdars (landholders) in the southern part of the empire, and I think that all your plans will be carried into execution. This detachment of the army is well supplied with provisions, and every thing it can want ; and excepting in forage, for which every large body of troops must depend upon the country which is to be the seat of its operations, is nearly independent of the resources of this country. We owe this state of our supplies to the flourishing resources of Mysore, and to the ease with which they are brought forward for the use of the British armies. But any change in the sys-

but true, that for a brief campaign, the Europeans in India, from their pride and energy, and from a certain vigour of original constitution, will endure hardship, exposure to the sun, and fatigue, better than the majority of the natives ; but afterwards, alas ! they pay the heavy price of their exertions. When the moral excitement has passed away, they often sink into supineness ; disease invades them, and the gallant fellows wither into yellow and bloodless men ; and, while yet scarcely at mid-age, they die. It is well to mark these things, for thousands upon thousands of soldiers, in all armies and in all countries, sink down into early graves, which their own services have dug without the éclat of battle, without one leaf of laurel to mingle with the un welcome cypress.—*Military Memoirs, &c., by Major Sherer*, vol. i., p. 53.

tem of government will be immediately felt, and particularly by that body of troops which will be in advance.

"I hear nothing of any of Holkar's troops, and I do not know that we have an enemy in this country.

"I have the honour to be, &c.,

"ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

"To the Governor-general."

Forming the advanced detachment of the main body commanded by General Stuart, the troops of General Wellesley had considerable difficulties of a trying nature to encounter. But these were met with an energy and resolution which, inherent in the British, soon spread to the native ranks; and the soldiers of different nations, in the same service, seemed to vie with each other in opposing firmness and endurance to the enervating effects of the climate and season, added to the duties of the soldier and long toilsome marches. The example of activity and unwearied perseverance was presented to all by their young general, an example which had the best effect on the conduct of his officers; and one which his excellent constitution, his spare and sinewy, yet compact and well-knit frame, and calm unruffled temper, well enabled him to support. In his subsequent despatches to Lieutenant-general Stuart, which contain some excellent suggestions regarding the war, he describes the rapid progress he was making, the encouraging reception he met with, and his impression that a month would bring their military operations to great maturity. "In that space of time,"* he observes, "we shall be able to ascertain whether Holkar will acquiesce peaceably in our arrangement with the Peshwah, or whether that chief must be driven from his Highness's territories by force. In less than that time, also, the manner of hiring those troops can be laid before his Highness, and he can decide whether or not he will retain them in his service. If he should not approve of retaining them, they may

* Despatches.

either be discharged, or may be employed in the plunder of the enemy without pay, according to circumstances: and at all events, supposing that his Highness should refuse to pay their expence, which is scarcely possible, the charge to the Company will be trifling in comparison with the benefit which this detachment must derive from keeping this body of Pindarries out of Holkar's service, and from cutting off our communications with the army. Upon the whole, therefore, I request your confirmation of this necessary arrangement. Gocklah has joined me with his army, and I am to meet him this afternoon."

His next letter is dated from his camp at Erroor, on the north bank of the Kistna, in which, it is stated, that he had halted two days to establish a field hospital, which was much wanted for the native corps. He notices, with evident pleasure, the effective condition, and the comforts of the army, which was well supplied and provided for. Like all great commanders his mind was intent on the most minute, as well as most important matters;—he had an examination of all the stores, a muster of the cattle, and he remarks that the Company's draft cattle were in high condition,—that he had 10,000 brinjarry bullocks in his camp—with supplies which would last exactly fifty days, and that he had the prospect of other brinjarries coming in. Of the actual condition of the country, he observes, that since the year 1800, when he was in that country before, there had been one continued contest for power and plunder between the different chiefs who had armies under their command; between the Putwurden's family and Gocklah, in the countries bordering on the Toombuddra, Werdah, and Malpurba; between the Putwurden and the Rajah of Kolapoor, in those bordering on the Gutpurba and Kistna; between Bappojee Scindiah, the Killedar of Darwar, and the Rajah of Kittoor; between Gocklah and the Rajah of Kittoor, and Gocklah and Bappojee Scindiah; besides various others of inferior note, either immediately employed under these, or for themselves under their protection.

In the passage that follows, and which displays the writer in

a light no less favourable as a statesman than as a soldier, it is apparent that he employed the influence he had acquired for pacific and beneficial purposes. "I have prevailed," he adds, "on all these chiefs to cease their contests for the present, and to join this detachment with the troops which otherwise would be employed in the plunder of the country, or in the prosecution of their private quarrels, and to co-operate with me in the service of the Peshwah. They have also allowed me the use of the supplies of the country under their management or protection, on payment; and have protected the people belonging to my camp in their passage through their countries."* He next gives an account of the number of native troops by which he had been joined on his march, and his intended junction with Colonel Stevenson. He learnt that Holkar, with the main body of his army, had gone towards Hindostan Proper, by the Nimderrah Ghaut, which would facilitate his object of advancing and uniting his force with that of the colonel.

General Wellesley was accompanied in his march by Major, since Sir John Malcolm, whose intimate knowledge of the country and of the people, enabled him to carry into effect the sound and conciliatory policy now pursued. In the subsequent communications with Lieutenant-general Stuart, it appears that it was not only followed with success, but that the personal influence and high military character already acquired by General Wellesley, produced the most beneficial changes in the disturbed districts through which they passed. Nor was his humanity towards several of the fallen princes, on this and upon former occasions, less commendable. The Nabob of Savanore and his family were in a state of the utmost destitution, and no sooner was he made acquainted with the fact than he consented to relieve their distresses by the donation of 5000 rupees. In a letter dated from his camp, at Hungomgaum, (April 5th, 1803,) he observes, upon this subject, that in his opinion, "even if the whole of this sum of money be given to the Nabob, it will be

* Despatches.

well laid out. At all events his family is an object of charity; and although not to such an extent as Major Malcolm now proposes, I relieved their distresses myself, when I was in this country in the year 1800.”*

The next account of General Wellesley’s progress is from his camp at Huttée : in a letter to Colonel Munro, in which he gives directions for the preparation of a number of basket boats adapted for crossing the Indian rivers. “ You will see by the date of this letter,” he adds, “ that I have lost no time ; and I am still in high style. I am now moving towards the Nizam frontier, to facilitate a communication with Colonel Stevenson, and eventually our junction. As I advance, Futty Sing and Meer Khan fall back, and I meet with no opposition. I expect to be at Poonah sometime about the 20th.” Upon the 11th of April he encamped at Kowlaspoor, where he learnt that Holkar appeared to be in full march to Chandore. “ Futty Sing and Meer Khan cross the Beemah this day, I believe, to follow him : all his troops are withdrawn from the neighbourhood of Poonah ; in which city, however, Amrut Rao still remains with about 2000 horse, and 2000 infantry with guns.”

Upon the 15th, General Wellesley arrived at Aklooss upon the river Neera, where he stated that the objects he had in view were to open a communication with the coast, so as to draw from thence the supplies he might require. He had already arranged a plan for the Peshwah’s march, and in order to secure the execution, intended to move immediately towards Poonah, and from thence towards the Bhore Ghaut. He would thus reach the head of the Ghaut before the Peshwah could arrive at the foot of it.

Holkar was now near Chandore, about 300 miles from Poonah, which was occupied by Amrut Rao, with not more

* Despatches, &c. That this is no solitary instance of General Wellesley’s good feeling and consideration, his conduct to the son of Dhoondiah Waugh, upon whom he settled a regular provision, affords a sufficient proof, and of which many more instances yet more honourable to him as a man, as well as a truly great soldier, will occur in the course of the present narrative.

than 1500 men. It appeared to General Wellesley, therefore, unnecessary to advance with all his troops; the country was also much exhausted, and there was very little forage in his line of march. He disposed his troops to so much advantage, that while the whole could procure subsistence, they might still unite with celerity, in case it should be found advisable. From the camp at Aklooss, having effected a junction with the Nizam's army, General Wellesley advanced with his cavalry and the Mahratta troops upon Poonah, where he arrived, as he had expected, on the 20th instant. In his despatches to the Governor-general at this period, he takes a correct and comprehensive view of the state of affairs, and, with that clearness and simplicity of language which marked the manly tone of his mind, pointed out the true policy, which, in the midst of conflicting parties, it became the interest of the Company, no less than the honour of Great Britain, to pursue. On his reaching Poonah, General Wellesley learnt that Amrut Rao had marched off with precipitation, having previously removed the Peshwah's family to Sevaghur, a measure generally supposed to be preparatory to burning the town. The able manner in which he proceeded with regard to this savage chieftain, and to consolidate the power he had acquired, cannot be so well shown as in his own words to the Governor-general:*

"I received a very civil letter from Amrut Rao, in answer to one which I wrote him. He says that he will send a person to talk to me upon his business. I consider it to be very important that he should be brought in, and I will do every thing in my power to induce him to submit to the Peshwah's government.

"Matters in general have a good appearance. I think they all will end as you wish. The combined chiefs, of whom we have heard so much, have allowed us to come quietly, and take our station at this place; and, notwithstanding their threats, have taken no one step to impede our march, or to divert our attention to other objects.

* The despatch is dated Poonah, 21st April.

.. "Here we are now in force, in a position from which nothing can drive us, and in which we shall gain strength daily. On the other hand, they have not yet made peace among themselves; much less have they agreed to attack us, or in any particular plan of attack. If I should be mistaken, and that, in opposition to the conclusions of reasoning upon the state of our affairs with each of the Mahratta chiefs, who, we were told, were to combine to attack us; and, upon a comparison of our means of annoying each and all of them with theirs of annoying the Nizam (which is all that they can do), we should still have a war with them, you will have the satisfaction of reflecting, that in consequence of the course of measures which you have already pursued, you have removed the seat of war to a distance from the Company's territories; and that you have the means of carrying it on in such a state of preparation, as to ensure its speedy and successful termination.

"In thus reasoning upon the subject, I conclude that we should have had to contend with this confederacy, at all events; or, at least, that we should have had a war with the Mahratta powers, in some shape, even if this treaty with the Peshwah had not been concluded. Upon this point, I have only to observe, that the establishment of Holkar's power at Poonah, founded, as it was, upon repeated victories over Scindiah's troops, would probably have occasioned demands upon the Nizam. But, supposing that I may be mistaken, I declare, that from what I have seen of the state of this country, it would have been impossible for Holkar to maintain an army in the Deccan, without invading the Nizam's territory. They have not left a stick standing at the distance of a hundred and fifty miles from Poonah; they have eaten the forage and grain; have pulled down the houses, and have used the materials as firewood; and the inhabitants are fled with their cattle. Excepting in one village, I have not seen a human creature since I quitted the neighbourhood of Meritch; so that the result of your omitting to make some arrangement

for the Peshwah, which was to occasion the re-establishment of his power, must have been the invasion of the Nizam's territories ; if only for the subsistence of those multitudes in Holkar's suite, on their march to the countries to the southward of the Kistna. This last course might have procrastinated the evil; as they might, in those countries, have found subsistence for another year; but then their next step would have been to seek for it in the Company's territories, the very sources from which we should have been obliged to draw our supplies in the contest which must have ensued."*

The next despatches of General Wellesley are dated from his camp at Panowullah, whither he had made a movement from Poonah on the 27th, in consequence of intelligence received of the proceedings of Holkar. He directed Colonel Stevenson to collect the Nizam's army and the subsidiary force at Gardoona, and make three or four marches to the northward. If he should find that Holkar was only plundering the villages on that frontier, in the same manner as they have been plundered in every year by every chief who approaches the boundary, he was not to go farther on; but if he should find that the chief made a serious attack upon either of the Nizam's cities of Doulutabad or Aurungabad, he must move quickly to their support. It was the opinion, however, of General Wellesley, that Holkar's was only a plundering excursion, and that he would not venture upon so desperate a course, while still at variance with Scindiah, as to make a regular attack on the Nizam. The only doubt he had on his mind was respecting the propriety of giving Colonel Stevenson orders to advance, occasioned by the Governor-general's express wish that all hostilities should be avoided; yet he decided with that tact peculiar to him in every emergency, that such considerations should yield to the anticipated danger of an attack upon the Nizam's territories, should it be really contemplated. In writing also to

* Despatches, p. 144.

Lieutenant-general Stuart, his observations upon the prospects of the campaign are marked by the same penetrating genius and force of mind, showing, at the same time, the accurate calculation and the foresight which he knew how to employ.

Upon the 7th of May General Wellesley announced the arrival of the Peshwah, with whom he had a formal interview, and that it was his intention to press him with regard to business very shortly. Such, indeed, was the General's promptitude and despatch, that by the 10th, the Peshwah found himself, no doubt to his surprise, busily arranging his government, appointing new ministers, and expressing his fixed determination to adhere to the treaty with the Honourable Company, so as to carry into effect the objects of the alliance.

Having thus restored the Peshwah, seen him reseated on his own musnud,* and secured his adhesion to the British alliance, General Wellesley proposed to move towards the Nizam's frontier, in order to be rather nearer to Colonel Stevenson. The moment was critical; Scindiah, instead of retreating, had joined the Rajah of Berar; both were now in the field, and made a bold movement, threatening the frontiers of our ally. The rivers were about to fill; and it appeared to General Wellesley, that if Scindiah intended hostilities, he had made this rapid advance, either to establish himself in some post of consequence, or to make a dash at Hyderabad, so as to get back across the Godaverry before that river filled. To impede this operation, he had placed Colonel Stevenson in so advantageous a situation, that while he kept a watchful eye on the proceedings to the northward, he could at once march upon Hyderabad, if he should find that they had views on that place.

Holkar and Scindiah, indeed, were now the only enemies that remained for General Wellesley to subdue. To such an extent had he obtained the confidence of the Peshwah, that the

* His throne: literally, cushion.

latter did not hesitate to avail himself of the influence which from a variety of causes, he had acquired over the sirdars and jaghirdars of the state ; his orders to them on points of importance were generally transmitted through the General, who enforced them by despatches from himself, an united mode of proceeding which could scarcely fail of efficient operation.*

Having by these means consolidated the British power as he advanced, it became General Wellesley's next object to terminate the campaign, if possible, at as little expense and with the same signal success as it had hitherto been so auspiciously conducted. With regard to Amrut Rao, his conciliatory policy promised to be crowned with the deserved success. In his last reply to the General's letters, he promised from that moment to separate himself from the Peshwah's enemies, and to hold no further communication with them ; and he requested that the British government would interfere to reconcile him to his brother, the Peshwah, and to obtain for him a provision in the state.

Upon the 4th of June, General Wellesley broke up from his camp at Karowly, and moved on towards the Godavery. Upon the 7th he was encamped at Pagiah, had moved to Augah on the 18th, and on the 19th wrote to Lieutenant-general Stuart from Rony. "I think," he observes, "that if Holkar has crossed the Taptee there will be no confederacy. There has been no further account of the irruption into Guzerat since

* Upon the 20th of June, the Governor-general, in his address to the Secret Committee of the Honourable Court of Directors, in describing the very favourable progress of the Mahratta war, took occasion to refer to the series of splendid services, both of a military and diplomatic nature, performed by Major-general Wellesley, within the brief period of his resumption of the command. No eulogy could equal the following plain statement upon the subject : — "The judicious arrangement which Major-general Wellesley has effected for the disposition of the troops under his command, is calculated to meet every exigency of affairs. Even under the improbable supposition that Scindiah, the Rajah of Berar, and Rao Holkar have really entertained designs of an hostile nature against the British government or its allies, our early state of preparation, and the formidable force which General Wellesley has opposed to every possible operation of any or all of those chieftains, must effectually deter them from the prosecution of the war."

that which I sent you on the 14th, and I conclude that my conjectures on that subject are correct. I do not know how the Peshwah manages his concerns; but we have not yet had the smallest assistance from Poonah of any kind. Notwithstanding my repeated requisitions to Colonel Close, and his request to the government, none of the Sirdars have joined us, and, as late as the 16th, had not quitted Poonah.

"The Peshwah's servants are very profuse in promises, but very sparing in performance; and we have enjoyed so little of the resources of the country, which it is so obviously the advantage of the inhabitants to supply to us, that I am almost induced to suspect counteraction on the part of the government."

From the following passage, in another of his letters, it appears that he was well acquainted with the intrigues of the confederacy which he suspected the present conduct of the Peshwah was meant to favour. "It is obvious, from all the proceedings at Scindiah's camp, that there is some consideration which operates upon that chief and the Rajah of Berar, to induce them to delay the decision, whether there shall be a war or not. It cannot be a sense of the risk which they must incur in the contest, because they must be well aware that, although the treaty of Bassein interferes with their projects of ambition, it provides effectually for the security of each against the force of the Peshwah; I conclude, therefore, that the cause of the wished-for delay is, that Holkar has not yet consented to their plans. It is not improbable but that he insists upon certain cessions from Scindiah, as the price of his becoming a member of the confederacy."*

That the opinions entertained by General Wellesley were perfectly correct, not only upon one, but upon all the points to which he alludes in his despatches, appeared by the subsequent measures adopted by the Governor-general in council, previous to the commencement of hostilities against the combined chiefs. In a communication to General Wellesley, dated 26th of June,

* Despatches, Mahratta war.

from Fort William, it is declared, that "the present state of affairs in the Mahratta empire, and the security of the alliance lately concluded between his Highness the Peshwah and the British government, required that a temporal authority should be constituted at the least possible distance from the scene of eventual negotiation or hostilities, with full powers to conclude upon the spot whatever arrangements may become necessary, either for the final settlement of peace or for the active prosecution of war. The success of the military operations now placed under your directions, may depend on the timely decision of various political questions which may occur with relation to the interests and views of the several Mahratta chiefs and jaghirdars, and of their Highnesses the Peshwah and the Nizam; on the other hand, the issue of every political arrangement now under negotiation with the power of Hindostan or the Deccan, must be inseparably blended with the movements of your army.

" It is, therefore, necessary, during the present crisis, to unite the general direction and control of all political and military affairs in Hindostan and the Deccan under a distinct local authority, subject to the Governor-general in council. These powers could not be placed with advantage in any other hands than those of the general officer commanding the troops destined to restore the tranquillity of the Deccan.

" Your approved ability, zeal, temper, and judgment, combined with your extensive local experience: your established influence and high reputation among the Mahratta chiefs and states, and your intimate knowledge of my views and sentiments concerning the British interests in the Mahratta empire, have determined me to vest these important and arduous powers in your hands."*

Upon finding himself invested with powers so extensive, free and unshackled to carry his views of the public service into full effect, General Wellesley lost no time in seizing the advantages thus offered to him, and with which his reputation and future

* Despatches, &c., Mahratta war.

prospects were so intimately blended. He immediately opened a correspondence with Scindiah, which shews at once the extent of his capacity, and his singular penetration in detecting and counteracting the designs of the confederated chiefs. The usual arts of oriental diplomacy, with all those little subterfuges and delays upon which its partisans so much pride themselves, were here vainly employed either to mislead his judgment or to shake his resolves. His bold, decided, yet enlightened policy was more than a match for the evasions of his adversaries, while his straightforward resolute manner threw them off their guard and developed their real intentions. His first step was to demand of Scindiah that he should separate his army from that of the Rajah of Berar, and instantly re-cross the Nerbudda.

In the various instructions given from his camp at Sangwee to his different agents, he repeatedly insists upon the necessity of bringing Scindiah to a decision, and of forcing him to give that only proof of his pacific intentions. He pledged himself, at the same time, that the British troops should resume their ordinary stations the very moment that this requisition was complied with.

Were any evidence wanting of the consummate ability of General Wellesley to conduct a negotiation to a successful issue, and to be prepared at all points to parry the attacks of his adversary, it would be found in the following passage, which may be considered his ultimatum before he made a last appeal to the sword. It exhibits another fact still more honourable to his character, and which the tenor of his whole life has served to illustrate ; namely, that he never advised a war, entered upon a campaign, or fought a battle, which he did not conceive to be necessary and unavoidable. "I have apprised Dowlut Rao Scindiah of my intention to take advantage of the position of the Company's troops, to attack his possessions, if he should advance one step towards the Nizam's frontier, after the receipt of my letter ; or if I found that he did not withdraw his troops to their usual stations, north of the river Nerbudda.

"I have not fixed when he should withdraw : first, because

I wish to keep in my own heart the period at which hostilities will be commenced ; by which advantage it becomes more probable that I shall strike the first blow, if I should find hostile operations to be necessary ; secondly, there is every reason to expect instructions from the Governor-general applicable to the present situation of affairs in India, as well as in Europe. His Excellency must have received, by the 20th of June, the despatches from England of the month of March ; the intelligence of my march from Poonah, of the state of affairs at the Peshwah's durbar at that period, and of the state of the negotiation with Scindiah in the end of May. Excepting that Dowlut Rao Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar have made a pacific declaration, the sincerity of which must be doubted so long as their actions are not conformable thereto ; that those chiefs have approached nearer to the Nizam's frontier ; that more progress has been made in effecting the pacification between Dowlut Rao Scindiah and Holkar, and more of the resources of the British troops have been consumed,—circumstances are nearly in the state in which they were at the period of which the Governor-general then received accounts. By avoiding to fix a day on which Scindiah must retire, I have it in my power to alter my course of action, in conformity to these instructions, in case that measure should be necessary."*

From this masterly statement, no less than from his subsequent correspondence, it is evident, that General Wellesley considered the extraordinary powers confided to him as a sacred trust, which he felt bound to exercise with impartial justice, in reference both to the interests of the rival chiefs and those of the honourable Company. He expressly informed them that, consistently with the principles and uniform practice of the British government, he was perfectly ready to attend to their interest, and to enter into negotiations with them upon objects by which they might suppose those interests to be affected. He further instructed the Soubahdar to tell Rao

* Despatches, &c., Mahratta war.

Holkar, that the British government had no intention to injure or interfere with him ; that he was much pleased at his having crossed the Taptee ; and that he should be still more pleased to hear that he had gone across the Nerbudda into the territories of his family.

But, notwithstanding the repeated proofs he had given of his pacific views, the strange conduct of the confederates, at once dilatory, wayward, and arrogant, at length compelled General Wellesley to come to a final decision, which he himself communicated in the following letter to Rao Scindiah. " I have received your letter (here the contents are recapitulated). You will recollect that the British government did not threaten to commence hostilities against you ; but you threatened to commence hostilities against the British government and its allies ; and when called upon to explain your intentions, you declared that it was doubtful whether there would be peace or war ; and in conformity with your threats, and your declared doubts, you assembled a large army in a station contiguous to the Nizam's frontier.

" On this ground, I called upon you to withdraw that army to its usual stations, if your pacific declarations were sincere ; but, instead of complying with this reasonable requisition, you have proposed that I should withdraw the troops which are intended to defend the territories of the allies against your designs ; and that you, and the Rajah of Berar, should be suffered to remain with your troops assembled, in readiness to take advantage of their absence.

" This proposition is unreasonable and inadmissible, and you must stand the consequences of the measures, which I find I am obliged to adopt, in order to repel your aggressions.

" I offered you peace on terms of equality, and honourable to both parties ; you have chosen war, and are responsible for all consequences."*

Under these circumstances, General Wellesley lost no time

* Despatches, &c., Mahratta war.

in commencing operations. The officer commanding the troops at Baroda, was directed to attack Scindiah's fort at Baroach ; and on the 12th of August, the General himself took the field, and marching to Ahmednugger, summoned the Killedar of that fort to surrender. The pettah (town) was held by a body of Arabs, supported by a battalion of Scindiah's infantry, and a body of horse encamped in an open space between the pettah and the fort. The pettah wall was very lofty, defended by towers, and had no rampart ; so that when the troops had ascended to the attack, they had no ground on which to stand ; and the Arabs defended the towers with the utmost obstinacy. When compelled to quit them, they fled to the houses, from which they continued a destructive fire. Scindiah's regular infantry, at the same time, attacked our troops, but both were at length compelled to fly, and the British were masters of the pettah. On the ensuing morning, a battery was opened against the fort, and in a short time it capitulated.

Situated on the frontier of the Nizam, and covering Poonah, the occupation of the fort of Ahmednugger was an important point of support to future operations. With the exception of Vellore, in the Carnatic, General Wellesley considered it the strongest fort in level country that he had yet seen. His next object was to cross the Godavery, and to gain possession of Scindiah's territories south of that river, securing their resources for the use of the British troops, and depending upon Ahmednugger as a point of support.*

* It was at this period that an incident occurred with regard to one of the officers—a Captain Bates, which showed the strong sense entertained by General Wellesley, of the necessity of preserving strict discipline in the commissariat, no less than in other departments of the British army.

In respect to Captain Bates, he says “ My reason for wishing that he might be brought to a court-martial was, that the whole case might be made public ; for it appeared to me that, although this officer commanded a detachment at some distance from Surat, he was subsisting upon provisions brought daily, or every two or three days, from that place. And, if my notion be correct upon this subject, it is probable that he could have been justified for having retired, and that those who sent out a detachment so supplied would have been blameable.”

For some days before quitting his camp near Ahmednugger, General Wellesley was engaged in regulating the internal affairs of our new dominions, and forwarding such instructions to his agents at different courts as appeared to him most conducive to the successful termination of the war.

While preparing to march on Toka, he received rather unpleasant accounts from Colonel Stevenson. A party of the enemy's horse was passing the Adjunta hills, when, instead of dashing at them, the colonel called in a battalion of infantry and some horse which were in his front ; a movement of which, as leading him into a long defensive operation in which he must be a loser, General Wellesley entirely disapproved. He desired him, therefore, to move forward with the Company's and the Nizam's cavalry ; to leave the infantry in a centrical situation for his supplies to collect upon, and to dash at the first party that came into his neighbourhood. " In this manner he will, at all events, have his supplies, and if he cuts up, or only drives off, a good body of horse, the campaign is our own. We must get the upper hand, and if once we have that, we shall keep it with ease, and shall certainly succeed. But if we begin by a long defensive warfare, and go looking after convoys which are scattered over the face of the earth, and do not attack briskly, we shall be in distress."*

The foregoing passage, in which the military genius and the bold decided character of the future hero of the Spanish Peninsula is too evident to be mistaken, augured well for the successful issue of the Mahratta war. We are not surprised to learn, therefore, in his subsequent despatch to General Lake, that he was already in possession of all Scindiah's territories south of the Godavery, that his troops were in active march, and that he expected to cross that river immediately in

* " The service cannot be carried on in this manner ; the troops must have regular supplies of provisions at command, or misfortune and disgrace will be the result."—*Despatches &c., Mahratta War.*

force.* Upon the 18th of August he took up a position north of the Nimderah Ghaut, and announced his intention of reaching Aurungabad in a few days. Both upon his march and in the intervals of his encampments he was still actively engaged in corresponding with the different residents at the courts of our allies, and in suggesting or advising those civil and political measures, as well as directing the military proceedings, which he considered the most beneficial for the public service. By great energy, perseverance, and penetration; by his clear judgment, and prompt decision, combined with temperance and the most active habits, he was enabled to take upon himself duties which are generally considered incompatible, but which he discharged to the perfect satisfaction of the Governor-general and of the Company. It is impossible to peruse these documents, written during an active campaign, without astonishment at the continued and well-sustained exertions of which his mind was capable, and still greater respect for the talent and right feeling which they evince throughout. We only regret that the limits of the present work will not allow us to go sufficiently into details to give that full and complete view of the intellectual resources, and rare energy of character,—considered wholly independent of his military genius and skill,—which have distinguished his public career.

To interest the general reader in the narrative of a campaign, nothing appears more desirable, if not essential, than

* It appears from the same letter to the Commander-in-chief, that General Wellesley kept a watchful eye upon the conduct and merits of the different officers who served under his command. He was always delighted to observe instances of strict duty in the camp combined with gallantry in the field; and he never omitted an opportunity of rewarding bravéry, and giving talent fair play, whenever they came under his notice. "I write," he says, "to recommend to your patronage Mr. Tew, to whom I understood you did intend to give an ensigncy. He accompanied the 74th regiment on this service, and distinguished himself in the attack of the pettah of Ahmed-nugger, on the 8th instant."

to give a connected series of dates and of movements, which passing before him in review—gradually, as in a dramatic action—draws towards the anticipated close. Such elucidation is, moreover, peculiarly requisite to keep awake our attention in a war like that in which General Wellesley was engaged; and which oftener assumes the aspect of predatory, dashing attack, wild pursuit—in short, of a hunt, than a regular, hard-fought campaign.

But, of whatever character, there was no time lost by General Wellesley in following up the war, when once compelled to take the field. He could rouse all his energies, so as to task them to the uttermost, with that untiring spirit and perseverance which animates the boldest hunter in a long day's chace. On the 21st of August we see him at his camp near Senboogaum, from which he addressed a letter to Colonel Murray ;—an admirable letter, which contains sentiments which every commander would do well to impress deeply upon his memory, whether in garrison or in the field. “ You will receive from Mr. Duncan a copy of my letter to him, of the 2d instant, detailing my ideas regarding the organization of the troops, and the defence of Guzerat: in addition to which I have but little to say. The calculations of numbers which I have made in that letter, have included sick, of which I am sorry to observe that there are a vast number at Surat. I recommend this point to your attention and inquiry; and if you should have reason to believe that the station, in which are the barracks of the European troops, is unhealthy, you will recommend to government that it may be altered; and that, in the mean time, the troops may be encamped in a healthy situation. Every attention must be paid to economy; but I consider nothing in this country so valuable as the life and health of the British soldier; and nothing so expensive as soldiers in hospital. On this ground, it is worth while to incur almost any expense to preserve their lives and their health. I also request you to pay particular attention to their

discipline and regularity, and to prevent their getting intoxicating liquors, which tend to their destruction."*

On the 24th of August General Wellesley writes from his camp at Toka, north of the river Godavery, to the Governor-general, stating that Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar had not entered the Nizam's territories upon the 20th, but had moved from the Adjunta Ghaut eastward, towards the Badowlee, and that Colonel Stevenson was at no great distance from them. Still pressing on, he was at Aurungabad on the 29th, and encamped at Bulgaum the ensuing day. He next proceeded about twenty miles east of Aurungabad, where he learnt that Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar had entered the Nizam's territories, having passed Colonel Stevenson with an army of horse only, bending their course upon the river Godavery. "I hope to be able to strike a blow against their myriads of horse in a few days; if I should not be so unlucky as to have the Godavery become fordable about six weeks sooner than usual." The next stages of his progress were Unterwarry and Rackisbaum, from which last place, he meditated an attack upon the Rajah of Berar. Early in September, Colonel Stevenson took the fort of Jalnapoor; and the enemy moved a greater distance to the southward and eastward. On the 4th of September General Wellesley proceeded to Pepulgaum,† where he heard that the enemy were at Purtoor, designing to cross the Godavery, and to march upon Hyderabad. Upon the 7th the General encamped at Kurkah, from whence he writes to Colonel Munro, on the 8th, that

* Despatches, &c.

† In his letter to Colonel Close from this place, is the following passage on the subject of the command in Guzerat, with which, owing to the want of a clear and definite understanding, he declined having any thing to do. "Mr. Duncan," he says, "has made a curious kind of half arrangement respecting the command in Guzerat; and I am convinced that the consequence of it will be, that we shall lose all that we have got in that province. However, he is decidedly against my plan, and I shall have nothing to say to the province."—*Despatches, &c.*

he had succeeded in giving the enemy a turn, by making a few rapid marches to the southward, and shown them that they could not go alone to Hyderabad. They were compelled to return rapidly to the northward. The Bengal army also commenced offensive operations, and crossed the Jumna. The troops in Guzerat took Baroach by storm on the 29th of August, and Colonel Stevenson beat up a horse camp, and was preparing to repeat the attack.

While here, directing the operations of the war, General Wellesley's attention was disagreeably called to the subject of several courts-martial, arising out of some private differences between the officers. The view he took of the question is so correct, and the opinions he laid down are so excellent in all their bearings, tending to raise his character still higher in our eyes, that we willingly pause a moment from the progress of the campaign, to recommend them to the regard and to the emulation of all military men. "These courts-martial," he writes to Colonel Murray, "are distressing indeed, at present. I wrote you a long letter upon the subject the other day, and I shall not repeat now what I said then. We must endeavour to stop these trifling disputes, and turn the attention of the officers of the army to public matters, rather than to their private concerns. It occurs to me that there is much party in the army in your quarter; this must be put an end to. And there is only one mode of effecting this; and that is, for the commanding officers to be of no side, excepting that of the public, be they who they may, or in whatever service. The consequence will be, that the service will go on; all parties will join in forwarding it, and in respecting them; there will be an end to their petty disputes about trifles; and the commanding officer will be at the head of an army, instead of a party."

On the 20th of September, 1803, General Wellesley was at Golah Pangree, whence he wrote to the Governor-general, enclosing the copy of a letter which he had despatched that day to Major-general Campbell. From this, it appears that

the war had begun to assume a more threatening aspect. The confederate chiefs, who had hitherto carried on a predatory system at the head of their horse, supported only by straggling bodies of irregular infantry, armed with matchlocks, were now joined by sixteen battalions of foot, and a large train of artillery, under the direction of French officers. Holkar had not yet joined them; but the other leaders were rapidly concentrating their forces near Bokerdun, as if in contemplation of some combined attack. The fall of the strong fortress of Powangur, seemed the prelude to more decided operations, and it was quickly followed by the great and important victory of Assaye. At Saalgaum, on the 21st of September, General Wellesley arranged with Colonel Stevenson the details of a combined attack upon the enemy on the morning of the 24th; thus assuming the offensive, and anticipating the execution of their plans. This conference with Colonel Stevenson led to the happiest results; for while he was detached by the western route, on the 22d, the General himself proceeded by the eastern, round the hills between Budnapoor and Jalna. The two divisions were thus enabled to pass the defiles at the same time in one day, and by occupying them, prevent the enemy's escape to the southward,—a manœuvre attended with the most perfect success. The reports of the hircarrah (scouts) of the country represented the enemy to be in vast masses round Bokerdun; and having ascertained the best route, General Wellesley immediately continued his march, resolved, notwithstanding their immense superiority, to risk a battle. On the 23d he had arrived at Naulniah, and there first learnt the reports brought in to be correct, Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar having moved off that morning with their cavalry—the infantry being ordered to follow, while the whole lay encamped at the distance of six miles from the ground which he had intended to occupy. It was obvious that the attack was no longer to be delayed; and having provided for the security of his baggage and stores at Naulniah, he marched on to the attack. He saw the whole

of the strong, combined army—that of Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar—ready to receive him, drawn up on the bank of the Kaitna river, and nearly on the same ground which he had been informed they occupied. Their right, which consisted entirely of cavalry, was about Bokerdun, and extended to their corps of infantry, which were encamped in the neighbourhood of Assaye. “Although I came first in front of their right, I determined to attack their left, as the defeat of their corps of infantry was most likely to be effectual. Accordingly I marched round to their left flank, covering the march of the column of infantry by the British cavalry in the rear, and by the Mahratta and Mysore cavalry on the right flank.

“ We passed the river Kaitna at a ford beyond the enemy’s left flank, and I formed the infantry immediately in two lines, with the British cavalry as a reserve in a third, in an open space between that river and a nullah running parallel to it. The Mahratta and Mysore cavalry occupied the ground beyond the Kaitna on our left flank, and kept in check a large body of the enemy’s cavalry, which had followed our march from the right of their own position.

“ The enemy had altered the position of their infantry previous to our attack; it was no longer, as at first, along the Kaitna, but extended from that river across to the village of Assaye upon the nullah, which was upon our right. We attacked them immediately, and the troops advanced under a very hot fire from cannon, the execution of which was terrible. The pickets of the infantry and 74th regiment, which were on the right of the first and second lines, suffered particularly from the fire of the guns on the left of the enemy’s position, near Assaye. The enemy’s cavalry also made an attempt to charge the 74th regiment at the moment when they were most exposed to this fire; but they were cut up by the British cavalry, which moved on at that moment. At length the enemy’s line gave way in all directions, and the British cavalry cut in among their broken infantry; but some of their corps went off in good order, and a fire was kept up

on our troops from many of the guns from which the enemy had been first driven, by individuals who had been passed by the line, under the supposition that they were dead.

" Lieutenant-colonel Maxwell, with the British cavalry, charged one large body of infantry, which had retired and was formed again, in which operation he was killed ; and some time elapsed before we could put an end to the straggling fire, which was kept up by individuals from the guns from which the enemy were driven. The enemy's cavalry also, which had been hovering round us throughout the action, were still near us. At length, when the last formed body of infantry gave way, the whole went off, and left in our hands ninety pieces of cannon.

" The victory, which was certainly complete, has, however, cost us dear. Your Excellency will perceive, by the enclosed return, that our loss in officers and men has been very great ; and in that of Lieutenant-colonel Maxwell and other officers, whose names are therein included, greatly to be regretted.*

* Mahratta war : Despatches. The following graphic description of this memorable battle is also from the pen of a soldier,—and an admirable writer in his way, as our public journals have frequently testified,—Major Sherer :

" The camp colours were plucked from the ground, and the little army of Wellesley (4500 strong) moved on. With the 19th light dragoons, and three regiments of native cavalry, under Colonel Maxwell, the General himself advanced to reconnoitre. The infantry followed. After a march of about four miles, from an elevated plain in front of their right, he beheld the Mahratta camp. A host of nearly 50,000 combatants, horse, foot, and artillery, lay strongly posted behind the river Kaitna. A smaller stream, called the Juah, flowed, and its waters joined those of the Kaitna, at a point considerably beyond their left ; having there a vacant peninsula piece of ground of some space. The line of the enemy ran east and west along the northern bank of the Kaitna. The infantry lay upon the left, and all the guns. The position of this wing was a little retired upon the Juah, having its *point d'appui* on the village of Assaye, which leaned upon that river. The right consisted entirely of cavalry. The north bank of the Kaitna is high, rocky, and difficult ; the front, for the most part, unassailable.

" Upon his bay Arabian sat Wellesley, just opposite the enemy's right, then distant about a mile and a half, presenting to his view, in one magnificent mass, 30,000 horses. The cavalry under Maxwell formed up their brilliant line, and remained steady. Wellesley, with rapid glance, surveyed

I cannot write in too strong terms of the conduct of the troops ; they advanced in the best order, and with the greatest steadiness, under a most destructive fire, against a body of infantry far superior in number, who appeared determined to contend with them to the last, and who were driven from their guns only by the bayonet ; and,

the ground. From beneath the thick plumes of red horse-hair, which drooped over their bronzed cheeks, the manly eyes of the bold 19th dragoons looked on severely. The General resolved for battle. That this was the calm decision of a consulted judgment, is not probable ; but there is a tide in the affairs of men : he felt it swelling in his bosom, and took it at the happy ebb. A body of the enemy's horse moved out, advanced to within half a mile of the British cavalry, and threw out skirmishers, who fired a few shots. Some British troopers were ordered to drive back these skirmishers, and all again was still. The General, observing a spot with a few horses beyond the left of the enemy, where there was probably a ford, and which he saw they had neglected to guard, resolved to pass the Kaitna at that point ; to throw his small force entire upon that flank ; to attack their infantry and guns, and thus to neutralize the presence of their vast cavalry, or compel them to bring it into action under very confusing disadvantages, and on a more confined field. A bright and bold conception.

" The General, bidding Maxwell keep his present ground for a time, went back and brought up the infantry in person. With these last in steady columns, he now moved down upon the river. They marched silent and firm, every man in his place. It was to be the triumph of discipline. The courage of the heart was to be aided by the quick eye, the obedient ear, and the keeping calmly in the ranks. A cannonade played upon their line of march, as they approached the ford ; it was distant, and without effect. As they passed up out of the river, and the head of the column gained the clear ground above, a field battery within range opened upon them feebly. It was at this the anxious moment of directing with care the formation of the lines for battle, that the orderly dragoon, riding close to the General, had his skull torn away by a cannon-ball. The horse, feeling the relaxed bridle, and collapsing limb of his rider, fell a trembling, and kicked and plunged frantically, till he got quit of the corpse. An incident not worth the notice, but for the moment of its occurrence and the trouble it cost to those immediately near. Under this cannonade General Wellesley formed up his troops in three lines—two of infantry, the third of cavalry, which, as soon as the columns had crossed the ford, rode smartly down from their position, and took battle station in reserve. As a watching check upon the enemy's right, were left the Mysore horse and some cavalry of the Pesh-wah's, which marched with our army ; but, though useful here, they could not be ventured in the fight.

notwithstanding the numbers of the enemy's cavalry, and the repeated demonstrations they made of an intention to charge, they were kept at a distance by our infantry.

"I am particularly indebted to Lieutenant-colonel Harness and Lieutenant-colonel Wallace for the manner in which they conducted their brigades, and to all the officers of the staff for the assistance I received from them. The officers commanding, nearly all those of the staff, and the mounted officers of the infantry, had their horses shot under them. I have also to draw your Excellency's notice to the conduct of the cavalry conducted by Lieutenant-colonel Maxwell, particularly of the 19th dragoons.

"The enemy are gone off by the Adjunta Ghaut, and I propose to follow them, as soon as I can place my captured guns and wounded in security. Colonel Stevenson arrived this morning at Bokerdun, and I imagine that he will be here this evening."*

In whatever point of view considered, this was one of the most important battles which had been fought for a long time in India, and had a decided influence upon the campaign. It was gained also under difficulties and disadvantages which

"The order of battle being thus skilfully changed, the infantry of Scindiah was compelled to present a new front. They did so with greater ease than was expected. The line they now formed reached with its right up to the Kaitna, and its left upon the village of Assaye, on the Juah. The front now presented by the enemy was one vast battery, especially towards the left, so numerous and weighty were the guns, and so thickly were they disposed immediately near the village. The fire was rapid, furious, and terrible in execution; the British guns, few in number, opened as the line advanced, but were almost on the instant silenced. Their gunners dropped fast, and the cattle fell killed or lacerated beside them. With the fierceness of the struggle, and the fearfulness of the hazard, the undaunted spirit of the General rose. He at once abandoned the guns, and directed an advance with the bayonet: with the main body, he soon forced, and drove the enemy's right, possessing himself of their guns by a resolute charge."—*Military Memoirs, &c.*

* Despatches to his Excellency the Governor-general. Dated Camp at Assaye, 24th September, 1803.

would wholly have deterred a commander of less genius and daring from hazarding an attack. When we reflect that he had received information not to be relied upon, and found himself in front of a superior army, composed of the bravest troops in the country, that they occupied a most formidable position; that they had three or four times the number of infantry, with a vast quantity of cannon; and that he was so situated that he must either attack or retreat, we are at a loss whether most to admire the astonishing boldness of his decision, the prompt efficient measures which he took, or the skill and desperate valour with which he carried his design into execution.* With regard to the prudence of undertaking, at such fearful odds, to rout such immense masses, both of infantry and cavalry, in such positions, most military men no doubt would have paused, and some have entertained an opinion that he should have awaited the arrival of Colonel Stevenson; in short, that his resolution was dictated rather by adventurous heroism than the cool deliberation of an approving judgment. That this, however, was not so, we have sufficient evidence in the reasons which he has himself assigned for adopting the determined line of conduct which he did. He at first deliberated whether he should withdraw, and attack on the following morning; and he expressly states "that the consequences of his withdrawing would have been that he should have been followed by the enemy's cavalry, and might have found it difficult to reach Naulniah; that he should have been harrassed the whole of that day, and as he had only ground fortified by himself to secure his baggage in, it was ten to one whether he should not have lost a part of it during the attack on the following morning, and, at all events, should have been obliged to leave more than one battalion to secure it. During the attack of the 23d, the enemy did not know where the baggage was; and although it was so close to them they never

* The British loss amounted to nearly half the force engaged:—2201 Europeans and natives having been killed and wounded. The loss of the enemy was between 3000 and 4000.

went near it. Besides this, on the other hand, there was a chance, indeed a certainty, that the enemy would hear that Colonel Stevenson also would move upon them on the 24th, and would withdraw their infantry and guns in the night. He therefore determined to make the attack.”*

Not the least surprising feature of this terrific battle, was the rapidity with which General Wellesley made his movements, wielding his small force with so much science and activity as to more than counterbalance the superior strength of his adversary. With wonderful tact and promptitude he adapted it to the change of circumstances in such a manner as to foil, at the right moment, the utmost efforts and indisputable valour of the masses to which he was opposed. There was not a pause between the abandonment of his guns, silenced by the enemy, and the charge with the bayonet; before which time the 74th regiment and the pickets were dropping fast by the murderous fire from Assaye, and the Mahratta horse, at the same time, rode in amongst them. But the dragoons rescued them in a moment, driving the assailants with great slaughter across the Juah. Both seemed to vie with each other in their gallant and steady advance; and it was then that their General gave them support; and the enemy’s line was pierced in every direction. The British cavalry, charging the fugitives along the banks of the river, came up also precisely at the right moment, and the victory was in so far complete. Still, with so few troops, the General had some difficulty in securing the advantages which he had obtained; a train of the enemy’s guns, left in the rear, were actually turned upon the victors by the enemy lying on the ground to all appearance dead, who had been passed in the heat of pursuit; a stratagem often practised by native troops.† At that critical moment Colonel Maxwell, in charging gallantly a large body of infantry which had formed anew, was killed; and the enemy’s fire became so galling, that General Wellesley himself, advancing at the head of the 78th regiment, and the 7th of

* Despatches.

† Fragments of burst cannon were still observed on the field of Assaye within these few years.—ED.

native cavalry, attacked the enemy in the rear. Even then the fortune of the day seemed some time doubtful : vast bodies of the cavalry still hovered near ; they often threatened to charge ; and it was at that stage of the conflict that General Wellesley, having ordered the British dragoons to attack the reformed masses, turned these threatening efforts into a decisive and brilliant victory.*

The advantages derived, in a political view, from this triumph of our arms, were not less decided and important. The signal

* In the general orders dated from Fort William on the 30th of October, is contained the following just tribute to General Wellesley and the gallant army under his command.

The Governor-general in council has this day received from Major-general the Honourable A. Wellesley, the official report of the signal and splendid victory obtained by the troops under the personal command of that distinguished officer, on the 23rd of September, at Assaye, in the Deccan, over the combined armies of Dowlut Rao Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar. At the close of a campaign of the most brilliant success and glory in every part of India, this transcendent victory demands a testimony of public honour equal to any which the justice of the British government in India has ever conferred on the conduct of our officers and troops in the most distinguished period of our military history.

The Governor-general in council highly approves the skilful plan formed by Major-general the Honourable A. Wellesley, on the 21st of September, for precluding the escape of the enemy, and for reducing their combined army to the necessity of hazarding a general action. His Excellency in council also signifies his most cordial approbation of the magnanimity, promptitude, and judgment with which Major-general the Honourable A. Wellesley determined upon the instantaneous attack of the enemy on the 23rd of September.

During the severe action which ensued, the conduct of Major-general the Honourable A. Wellesley united a degree of ability, of prudence, and of dauntless spirit, seldom equalled and never surpassed.

The Governor-general in council signifies his warmest applause of the exemplary order and steadiness with which the troops advanced under a most destructive fire against a body of the enemy's infantry considerably superior in number, and determined to oppose a vigorous resistance to our attack. The numerous infantry of the enemy were driven from their powerful artillery at the point of the bayonet, with an alacrity and resolution truly worthy of British soldiers ; and the firmness and discipline manifested by our brave infantry in repelling the great body of the enemy's cavalry, merit the highest commendation.—*Despatches.*

defeat of the confederated chiefs gave an irreparable blow to their military reputation, and to the strength and efficiency of their resources in the Deccan, especially in that powerful arm of the artillery, in which lay their boasted superiority, and of which not fewer than one hundred and two heavy pieces were captured. Another great result was the expulsion of that immense predatory army which laid waste the territories of our ally ; and it might be reasonably expected, that with the previous successes of our arms in other provinces, the two more important victories gained at Delhi and Assaye would speedily reduce the enemy to offer favourable terms of peace, as regarded both Hindostan and the Deccan.

The strong fortresses of Burhampoor and of Asseerghur immediately surrendered. On the 25th General Wellesley ascended the Ghaut, and marched one hundred and twenty-eight miles in the eight following days, a rapidity of movement almost unequalled, and by which he at once saved his convoys, and freed the territories of the Nizam. He was fast upon the track of the Rajah of Berar, who had the utmost difficulty to reach his own country, with a remnant of his scattered forces, leaving the field open to the offensive operations of his victorious adversary. Yet, while thus actively engaged in promoting the interests of the Company and its allies, difficulties, which would have been insurmountable to most commanders, were thrown in his way by the weakness of the native government and its agents; conduct which called forth a sharp and well-merited remonstrance. "We may win battles," he observes, "and drive the enemy before us; but all that I can do will not save the Soubah's country from destruction, if his servants are not true to his cause, if they do not exert themselves in his service, if the British troops are not treated with confidence as friends, and if they do not enjoy the resources which the country can afford."*

It is pleasing to observe that, in the midst of an active campaign, and the discharge of the most responsible duties of a

* Despatches.

civil and military governor, General Wellesley always found time to attend to those minor offices of friendship and goodwill which most men, in less arduous circumstances, would have conceived themselves justified in wholly passing over. There is, in particular, one letter to Major Shaw, so characteristic of the writer, and of that strong good sense and right feeling which ever distinguished him in all civil and social transactions, that no one in describing the life of an illustrious soldier could conscientiously omit mention of it. In writing to recommend to the major's notice Mr. Thomas Pakenham, a writer on the Bengal establishment, he states, that he believed him to be very young and inexperienced, and, therefore, earnestly recommended him to the major's care and attention. "I have also," he continued, "given him a letter of recommendation to my friend, Mr. Ross, whom I have requested to have an eye upon his conduct, and above all things to prevent him from keeping bad company.

"Should the college last, of course he will attend that institution; if not, I have desired him to acquire a knowledge of the country languages. I request you to urge him particularly on this point, and do not allow him to be idle. Desire him to show you the letter which I have written to him. Do not allow him to run in debt; if he should want money, I have desired him to apply to David Ross, or you. Pray supply his wants if he should require it, and apply to David Ross for any sums you may give him."*

If sentiments like these, and an anxiety so earnestly expressed for the early formation of good habits and a virtuous character, are creditable to the feelings of General Wellesley as a man, we think the following observations on the conduct and disposition of our ally, the Peshwah, show his judgment and penetration as a statesman in no less favourable a point of view. "Lord Wellesley has taken up the question of paying the Peshwah's ministers on a great scale. The Peshwah is certainly sincere in his intentions to adhere to the alliance; but there is a

* Gurwood's Despatches.

crookedness in his policy, and the feelings of his mind are so far different from those which guide our conduct, that with the best intentions it must be expected we shall frequently clash. Besides, under the instructions from the Governor-general, we have adopted measures with respect to Amrut Rao and Holkar which must be highly disagreeable to him, and might occasion a desire to alter the alliance.

“The Peshwah has no ministers. He is every thing himself; and every thing is little. In my opinion, therefore, we ought to pay those who are supposed to be, and are called his ministers, not to keep the machine of government in motion in consistence with the objects of the alliance, as we do at Hyderabad, but to have intelligence of what passes in the Peshwah’s secret councils, in order that we may check him in time when it may be necessary.”*

It was reported, early in October, that General Lake had defeated the well-known French adventurer, Perron; and General Wellesley at the same time entertained designs of entering Berar. The only difficulty he felt was the entire want of magazines in the Rajah’s territories, but this he was determined to supply.†

While preparing to renew operations, however, a proposition was made from one of the confederates to General Wellesley, that he should send Captain Johnson and Rajah Mohiput Ram to treat on peace. But conceiving that the object of such a proposition was probably to revive the spirits of the enemy’s army, by showing that he had an agent in their camp, and was

* The Mahratta War.

† In a letter written to his brother, the Hon. H. Wellesley, at this period, in which he gives him an account of the battle of Assaye, General Wellesley remarks, that it was the most severe action ever fought in India, and followed by advantages such as had seldom been gained by any single victory in any part of the world.

General Wellesley lost two horses. Diomed (Colonel Aston’s horse, who had carried him in so many campaigns,) was piked, and another horse shot under him. Almost all the staff had their horses either killed or wounded, or were struck in some place or other.—*Letter dated fifty miles north of Aurungabad, 3d of October, 1803.*

desirous to enter into negotiation, General Wellesley declined it, on the ground that he had no overtures to make ; intimating at the same time, that if they had, they might send a sirdar, who should be treated with due respect and attention. "Thus," he observes, "I shall turn the tables upon them, and it may be depended upon, that, when once their army shall know that they have begun to treat for peace, they will not be very ready to fight.*

Events soon proved the correctness of General Wellesley's reasoning ; he had penetrated the real designs of the confederates, and brought their sincerity to the test.

In writing from his camp at Waukory, on the 7th of October, to General Lake, he states that the enemy had retired in much confusion to the Taptee river. The infantry marched to Burhampoor, and their cavalry to the westward, with an intention, it was supposed, of entering the Nizam's territories by the Casserbarry Ghaut, near Aurungabad. He suspected, however, that the report had been circulated with a view to draw away his attention from Burhampoor and the territories of the Rajah of Berar. He accordingly determined to watch their movements to the southward ; at the same time detaching Colonel Stevenson to attack Burhampoor, which speedily fell into his hands.

While thus engaged in bringing the campaign to a close, General Wellesley received the gratifying intelligence that the British arms had been no less successful in other quarters, and in the same despatch congratulates the Commander-in-chief on the prosperous state of affairs to the northward.†

* Despatches.

† Alluding to the brilliant successes of the army on the north-west frontier of Oude, under General Lake. The adversary with whom he had to deal was no less a personage than Mons. Perron, the famous adventurer already mentioned, as being in possession of the capital of the Mogul, and who was now actively employed at Delhi, in founding, as he fondly imagined, a new French empire in India. He had assembled a large force on the plains near Allyghur, a strong fortress ; his front was completely covered by an extensive, and almost impassable, swamp ; his right flank rested on the fort, and his left was very strong, both from the nature of the ground and the posi-

Following up his pursuit of the confederates, on the 8th of October General Wellesley encamped at Adjunta, and on the

tion of several villages. He was at the head of 15,000 horse, nearly half of which were regular cavalry. General Lake advanced to the attack in two lines, with the infantry supporting his horse in three or four lines, as the nature of the ground would admit. He was received by the enemy with a warm fire, while a large column of horse advanced to attack our cavalry, but were instantly driven back.

Such was the check they received, that, on perceiving the whole line of the British pressing forward, a sort of panic seemed to take possession both of Monsieur Perron and his grand army—the entire body of which kept retiring as fast as the English advanced, and left the field to their opponents without attempting to strike a blow.

It was in vain that General Lake's horse attempted to get sufficiently near them to make a charge; for if not the ablest, it was one of the most rapid retreats, previous to an action, ever known in military records. The very attempt to reach the enemy in itself resembled a flight; and the whole affair had less the appearance of a battle than of a fair Indian hunt. General Lake, at the head of the 27th dragoons, was among the first to advance to the charge; but finding nothing to do, had full leisure to turn his attention at once to the fortress, which he carried by storm in the most gallant style. The British pressed forwards to Secundra on the 9th, and on the 11th was fought the decisive battle of Delhi, in sight of that ancient capital. The general, with admirable skill, succeeded in drawing the enemy from the new position they had chosen into the open plain. Feigning a retreat, the cavalry first fell back upon the infantry, after which, opening in the centre, they permitted the enemy to pass on in front. The enemy, upon this movement, imagining our army to be actually in retreat, made a sudden advance with the whole of their guns; but they halted as suddenly on seeing the British infantry, who were now formed into one line with the cavalry in a second, some forty yards in their rear. It was at this moment that General Lake, at the head of the 76th, rushed through a tremendous fire, followed by the whole line, till within one hundred yards of the enemy, and not till then giving a single volley; they were enabled to charge with such decision that the enemy was dispersed in all directions. The pursuit was continued to the very banks of the Jumna, where great numbers of the unfortunate Perronites were drowned in the river.

Having viewed this brilliant action from the tower of Delhi, the mock emperor, the unfortunate Shah Allum, lost no time in sending to General Lake, with an intimation that he was most anxious to place himself and his authority under the protection of the British.

When the Commander-in-chief entered Delhi, conducting the heir-apparent Prince Mirza Akbar Schah, the throng in the city was so great that it was with difficulty the cavalcade could reach the palace. It was a glorious sun-

10th had moved thirty miles north of Aurungabad. He arrived at Phoolmurry on the 13th, where he remained several days; and having reason to believe that the enemy would unite in an

set, and tower and minaret were illuminated with the resplendent beams as the gay procession rode into the palace courts, filled with eager spectators anxious to behold the deliverance of their rightful sovereign. When ushered into the imperial presence, the General beheld the venerable monarch oppressed with the calamities of old age, degraded authority and loss of sight; seated under a small tattered canopy, with every external appearance of misery. Such was the impression made on the minds of the inhabitants by the noble and humane conduct of General Lake; that he was not only hailed as a Liberator, but in describing the event, the native historians, in the metaphorical language of the country, declared that the aged Emperor recovered his sight from joy. The old man shewed all the respect in his power to his deliverer, calling him by the second titles of his empire; "The sword of the state, the hero of the land, the lord of the age, and the victorious in war."

The country of Delhi being now settled under the government of its ancient princes, the British army pursued its career of conquest, and brought the Mahratta chiefs to action at Laswarree, where their defeat was complete, and the war in that quarter brought to a close.

In that action the second son of the Commander-in-chief, then major of the 94th regiment, had attended his father as aid-de-camp and military secretary during the whole campaign, and his gallantry and activity in executing his father's orders had been conspicuous in every service of difficulty and danger.

This gallant young officer constantly attended his father's person, and possessed the highest place in his confidence and esteem; and on this day whilst the army was advancing, the Commander-in-chief's horse having been pierced by several shot, and fallen dead under him, Major Lake, who was on horseback close to him, dismounted and offered his horse to his father; but the gallant veteran refused, until the major having procured a horse from one of the cavalry, he was prevailed on to take his son's charger. At that very instant a shot struck Major Lake and wounded him severely in the presence of his father, who then found it necessary to lead the troops against the enemy, and to leave his gallant and wounded son upon the field. Never, as the Marquis Wellesley observed, was a more affecting scene presented to the imagination, and never had Providence exposed human fortitude to a severer trial. But the general, in this dreadful and distracting moment, giving up all personal considerations, prosecuted his victory with the most unabated ardour; and at the close of the battle had the happiness of learning that his son's wound, although severe, was not likely to prove dangerous, and that he was still reserved to serve his king and country with hereditary ardour. He lived, however, but to fall at the glorious battle of Roleça in Portugal.—*Beaton, 134—138.*

attack upon Colonel Stevenson, who, after the capture of Burhampoor, had been detached against Asseerghur, he instantly descended the Adjunta Ghaut at the same time that Scindiah moved to the northward; but the latter now halted, on observing the advance of the British, and returned to the Taptee. Here the Rajah of Berar separated from him, proceeding, as it was reported, for Chandore. But penetrating their real design, which was to draw him to the southward, and having no longer any fears for Colonel Stevenson, now in possession of Asseerghur, and in a position to repel any attack, General Wellesley, immediately re-ascending the Ghaut, wholly frustrated the deep-laid scheme of the wily confederates. In an interesting letter to Major Shaw, dated the 26th of October, from his camp at Pahlood, General Wellesley takes the following retrospect of his proceedings. "I have received your letter of the 4th, and Sydenham's report of the campaign to the northward up to the 17th of September. Every thing appears to prosper, and I hope we shall soon bring the war to a conclusion.

"Since the battle of Assaye, I have been like a man who fights with one hand, and defends himself with the other. With Colonel Stevenson's corps I have acted offensively, and have taken Asseerghur; and with my own I have covered his operations, and defended the territories of the Nizam and the Peshwah. In doing this I have made some terrible marches; but I have been remarkably fortunate: first, in stopping the enemy when they intended to pass to the southward, through the Casserbarry Ghaut; and, afterwards, by a rapid march to the northward, in stopping Scindiah, when he was moving to interrupt Colonel Stevenson's operations against Asseerghur, in which he would otherwise have undoubtedly succeeded. I moved up the Ghaut as soon as Colonel Stevenson got possession of Asseerghur; and I think that in a day or two I shall turn Ragojee Bhoonslah, who has passed through to the southward. At all events I am in time to prevent him from doing any mischief. I think that we are in great style to be able to act on the offensive at all in this quarter; but it is only done by the celerity of

our movements, and by acting on the offensive or defensive with either corps, according to their separation and that of the enemy."

Of the comprehensive views, and excellent combinations of General Wellesley at this period of his service, we have already remarked several striking examples, and the following observations made by himself ought not to be passed over. "How unfortunate it is that we have not Guzerat in style ! If we had, I should immediately have a corps from that province on the back either of Scindiah's troops on the Taptee, or of his brigade in the Rajpoot countries, and thus put an end to the war by one blow.

" You will see that we shake at Hyderabad ; but Heshmut Jung, with all his faults, certainly manages well that Durbar ; and I have written to him to suggest that he should, for the present, desist from all teasing remonstrances upon trifling objects, and endeavour to convince the Nizam that a sense of his true interests, as well as the spirit of his treaty with the Company, should lead him to co-operate heartily in the common cause.

" I saw your brother yesterday, and he is doing well : indeed, all the wounded officers and men are fast recovering."

Nor was it only in the discharge of the more important and anxious duties of his station, that the conduct of General Wellesley, at this early period, commanded the respect and esteem both of his army and of his country. In visiting the sick officers and the wounded, he was ever punctual and unremitting ; while his liberality was equal to his kindness and attention. "The evening we left this last," says Major-general Sir J. Nicolls, "he sent into every one a dozen of Madeira from his stock, and that wine is neither cheap nor plentiful ; to day he was in amongst them before the camp was pitched, making inquiries, which are as honourable to his feelings, as they are agreeable and gratifying to the poor invalids. The men have every comfort which can be afforded from the camp, or procured here, which I fear are not very numerous ; indeed the

refugees from the adjoining parts, and Scindiah's wounded men, are dying here every day."

The campaign was at length drawing fast to a close; the strong places had all fallen; Scindiah's infantry was almost entirely destroyed, and vast numbers of his horse were also deserting him. The General was in full pursuit of the Rajah of Berar, who had come into the southward upon a predatory excursion; having passed through the hills which form the boundary of Candeish, and moved towards the river Godavery. He had again turned eastwards, and had reached Lakugaun, about twenty miles north of Puttun, in the neighbourhood of which General Wellesley arrived on the last day of October. So great was the Rajah's desire to avoid the British with his reduced forces, that he removed his camp no less than five times, and was repulsed even in an attempt to intercept a convoy conducted by Captain Baynes, though he had 5000 of his cavalry engaged with less than 1000 British and Mysore troops.

So rapid was the pursuit, that the enemy's camp was frequently in sight, and he was pushed so hard that he had no time to commit any ravages, excepting in the small villages.* Upon former occasions, where a native army once passed in its devastating career there was not the slightest chance of its obtaining support upon the same route for a second time; and the contrast now offered to the people in General Wellesley's victorious progress was not without its favourable effect upon the minds of the people.

Although the division of the army, including followers, who are the most determined plunderers, could not be reckoned at less than 40,000 men, had now marched three times over the same road, and been encamped near Phoolmurry four days, not a village had been pillaged or injured, indeed, rarely entered,

* In the rear of the left of our regiment there is a rose garden; (I am told they are numerous and extensive in Hindostan,) a Mussulman came to protect it; but the stubborn hearts of the bullock drivers could not be softened by any thing he said; they drove the artillery of the park through it."—*Journal of Major-general Sir Jasper Nicolls, K. C. B.*

except by the lower servants of the public departments ; the stacked grain remained untouched ; that in the village granaries had never been drawn from thence, except at fair prices ; and not a man had fled from any village on the line, as far as it could be ascertained. The protection afforded was conducted upon a regular plan, with the same regard to order and discipline which uniformly directed all General Wellesley's movements. He employed from twenty to forty orderly men to march in front and on the flanks ; two or three of them were stationed in every place he passed, where they stayed at the gates until the whole army and its followers had gone by. These men were to resist the entrance of any of the lower orders, and even of the officers, if it seemed to occasion alarm to the inhabitants. They were also placed in villages near the camp for the same purposes ; a generous treatment, from which the natives not only derived confidence, but that reliance on General Wellesley's protection which led them to show the greatest respect to any officer who had occasion to enter the places on his route.*

With the same regard to justice and right feeling towards the people, this distinguished commander omitted no opportunity, in his despatches to the Governor-general, of commanding the good conduct of the native troops, and he expressly stated that it was to the example set by the troops of Mysore that he attributed the good conduct of the Mahratta force serving with that division, and of which he had no reason to complain.

It ought not to be forgotten, likewise, that while engaged in preserving this excellent discipline in his own army, protecting the interests and conciliating the feelings of the people, and while carrying on an active campaign, General Wellesley was at the same time discharging the arduous duty of promoting the interests of the Company and of the British empire, by maintaining an extensive correspondence with the residents at the different allied courts. Both on general questions and in the minutest details of business, he pursued those measures, and that line of policy, which best tended to consolidate the do-

* Journal of Major-general Sir J. Nicolls, K. C. B.

minion he had won, and to merit the approbation of the Governor-general in council.

With unremitting assiduity he now directed all his efforts to the successful termination of the war. Towards the close of November, Scindiah found himself compelled to open new conferences, and to negotiate for a suspension of arms, which was agreed upon on the 23d of the same month.*

The arrangement, however, was made liable to be broken off by either of the parties upon giving notice of such intention, and being applicable only to the troops of Scindiah, the General relaxed nothing of his ardour in pursuit of the Rajah, now moving towards his own territories; but rapidly descended the mountains by the Rajoorah pass, in order to co-operate with Colonel Stevenson in the attack of Gawilghur.

On the 28th he succeeded in coming up with a large body of Scindiah's regular cavalry, supported by the greater portion of the Berar infantry; and he resolved, notwithstanding the earnest remonstrances of Scindiah's vakeel, to attack them without delay. His reply to these repeated entreaties was, that Scindiah, not having complied with the terms of the treaty, he should

* In the subsequent conferences between Major-general Wellesley and the vakeels of the confederates, from the 10th of November to the 29th of December—the whole written in the general's own hand-writing to the extent of eighty pages,—are contained some singular conversations, one of which shows how happily General Wellesley could parry the weapons of his wily adversaries. After the last conference, and when the treaty of peace was signed, Rajah Mohiput Ram, the vakeel or resident in camp, from the Nizam, Soubah of the Deccan, was anxious to ascertain from Major-general Wellesley, what particular countries and districts were likely to fall to the lot of his master. For various reasons too long to detail, the Major-general declined giving any information on the subject, when Mohiput Ram offered the General seven lacs of rupees for it; to this the General replied—"Can you keep a secret?" Rajah Mohiput Ram, hoping that he had touched the right chord, eagerly answered "Yes;" "And so can I," replied the General. The messenger who carried the despatches containing the desired information was afterwards waylaid and murdered; so that it seems not improbable that Mohiput Ram, no way dismayed by his first failure, may have attained his wishes by a more decided measure.—*Colonel Gurwood's Despatches, &c., vol. i., pp. 521—2.*

certainly attack the enemies of his country wherever he should find them. Immediately pressing forwards to Parerty, from which the confederates hastily retired, he proposed, on account of the extreme heat and the excessive fatigue of the troops, to relax for some hours from the pursuit; when the enemy himself afforded him the opportunity which he had so long and anxiously sought for. Large bodies of horse now appeared suddenly in front; the pickets advanced, and soon the entire army of the confederates was perceived, formed in one long line of cavalry, infantry, and artillery, extending a front of five miles on the plains of Argaum. Perceiving the enemy bent on risking an action, General Wellesley formed his army in one column; the British cavalry advanced in a direction nearly parallel to that of the enemy's line, while the rear and left were covered by the Mogul and Mysore cavalry. The attack was made in two lines; the infantry in the first, the cavalry in the second, supporting the right; the Mogul and Mysore cavalry supported the left, with the right rather advanced in order to press upon the enemy's left. The whole advanced in the greatest order; the battle was begun by a large body of Persian troops, who falling on the 74th and 78th regiments, maintained a desperate conflict at close quarters, but were entirely destroyed. At the same time, Scindiah's cavalry charged the left of the British line, and were instantly repulsed, when the whole of the enemy's line gave way, and fled in the utmost disorder, leaving thirty-eight pieces of cannon and all their ammunition in the hands of the British.

The pursuit was continued several miles by the cavalry, which destroyed great numbers, took an immense quantity of baggage, and secured all the advantages from the victory that could be obtained. It was the opinion of General Wellesley, that had he had day-light one hour more, not a man would have escaped, and that he would have had that time, if the native infantry had not been panic-struck, and got into confusion when the cannonade commenced. "What do you think," he observes, in a letter to Major Shaw, "of nearly three entire battalions, who behaved so admirably in the battle of Assaye, being broke, and

running off when the cannonade commenced at Argaum, which was not to be compared to that at Assaye? Luckily I happened to be at no great distance from them, and I was able to rally them and re-establish the battle. If I had not been there, I am convinced we should have lost the day. The troops were under arms, and I was on horseback, from six in the morning until twelve at night.

"Nothing could have been more fortunate than my return to the northward—I just arrived in time. Colonel Stevenson was not delayed for me more than one day; and it is a curious circumstance, that after having been so long separated, and such a distance between us, we should have joined at a moment so critical. The Rajah is much alarmed about Gawilghur, and I think he is sincere; indeed, I think Scindiah is so likewise. But every Mahratta chief is so haughty, and so prone to delay, that I suspect that both these chiefs will be ruined rather than submit to the conditions which I must require from them."*

There is no feature more marked and prominent in the character of General Wellesley, than a deep sense of the duties which he had to perform, and his anxious desire to discharge them to the best of his ability. It was this which so early acquired for him the confidence of those under whom he served, which brought his high military qualities into full display, and justified the Governor-general in conferring upon him the ample powers he so ably exercised. When addressing the Bombay government at this period, he observes, with that candour and freedom from all assumption, which appears no less in his conversations than in his despatches, "that in conducting the extensive duties with which he was charged, it had been his constant wish to conform to existing rules and establishments, and to introduce no innovations; so that at the conclusion of the war, when his duties would cease, every thing might go on in its accustomed channel. For this reason, and

* Camp at Akote, 2d of December, 1803.

for others not necessary at present to mention, I have sent no orders to Colonel Murray, excepting two orders applicable to the general state of affairs, which have lately gone to him, but which were first submitted to the Governor for his approbation. I do not comprehend, and cannot say that I admire, the system according to which the connexion with the Guickwar government is carried on; but this possibly proceeds from ignorance of the subject. At all events, I know that I am not able to suggest or order any measure that could remedy it; and if I were to interfere at all, I might order a measure which would be inconsistent with the existing system. I am, therefore, very desirous not to be called upon to take a more active part in the internal concerns of Guzerat than I have hitherto; and that matters should be conducted as usual, under the immediate orders of government. Whenever the honourable the Governor in council may think proper to call for my opinion upon any subject, I will give it him to the best of my judgment and abilities; and I will do so whenever I may think it necessary, in all matters which have a relation to our general situation."*

It will be perceived, from the foregoing, that the sound judgment and real diplomatic ability which he so clearly evinced in his negotiations with the confederates were, in General Wellesley, unalloyed with the slightest self-sufficiency, much less arrogance, or want of deference for the opinions of others. On the contrary, it may with justice be observed, after impartial investigation of the most eventful passages of his life, that with regard to his comprehensive views, and his capacity for conducting political and civil affairs, he scarcely estimated his abilities at their due value. In his prosecution of the present campaign he had repeated occasion to exercise the responsible powers with which he was invested, and which called for those mental resources which in all emergencies he could bring so promptly and vigorously into operation; and never were they more judiciously and successfully employed than in the difficult

* From his camp at Ellichpoor, 5th of December. Despatches, &c.

task of re-establishing the government of the Company's ally, the Peshwah.

On giving instructions for the reconciliation of one of the disaffected, we find the following excellent observations addressed to his agent, Colonel Close: "It is certainly desirable that this, as well as every other great chief of the Mahratta empire, should be conciliated and brought back into the service of the Peshwah. On this ground, I wish you to try whether you could prevail on the Peshwah to pardon Baba Phurkiah. He promises fairly that he will serve his Highness faithfully, and will never again have any communication with his enemies. If his Highness should consent to pardon Baba Phurkiah, I think that I can arrange with him to serve the state for his ancient serinjaumy, which was for seven hundred horse. I have informed Baba that I know the Peshwah is much incensed against him, and that I fear I shall find it difficult to appease his Highness. In the mean time, I have desired him to remove from the Soubah's territories, in which he now is, to those of the Rajah of Berar, beyond the Wurda, and I have promised to move to his assistance in case the Rajah should attack him.

" Thus I have succeeded in bringing upon that rascal the full measure of God's vengeance; and, if I live a month longer, he shall either be at peace with the Company, or I shall be at Nagpoor with all the armies with me or about me.

" Our late victory was grand; it has made a great impression throughout the country."*

How excellent and just, and at the same time how considerately and kindly expressed, are the following strictures, so strongly evincing his regard for right military feeling, no less than for strict discipline, conveyed in a letter to Colonel Murray.

" I have received your letter of the 15th of November, upon the subject of Bulchund having joined Canojee. That may be the case, and yet Holkar may not have entered the confederacy. I acknowledge that as he has kept out of the scrape so long,

* Despatches, &c.

and as we have been so successful, I shall be slow to believe that he will now come forward.

"I have already answered you upon the subject of the arrangements with the Bheels.* Concert them with Major Walker, so that we may not be involved in contradictory engagements, and let me know what you propose should be done, and I will ratify them, if I should approve of them. I have read with the utmost concern, the copy of a letter, which you wrote to General Nicolls, on the 12th of November. This paper was hastily drawn and despatched, to say no more of it; and I strongly recommend to you to desire to withdraw it. It contains some strong censures upon Mr. Duncan personally, and upon his government; and a hope is expressed in it, which I am convinced you could never entertain, that the day was not far distant when the government, and of course the British interests, would be involved in difficulties. An officer in the service of a government, let his rank be what it may, has no right to, and cannot with propriety, address such sentiments to that government; even supposing that they were merited and had been excited in his mind by a long course of injurious treatment by such government. So far from that being the case, I must say that the occasion upon which you wrote did not warrant such opinions, and ought not to have excited your anger in any manner. On the contrary, I think that the letter written to Major-general Nicolls, by the government of Bombay, promised the fullest support to your revenue arrangement at Godra, and that was all you could expect. For my part, I did not expect it; and when I received the copy of their letter to Major-general Nicolls, which I did when it was written, I was astonished that the subject should have been viewed in so liberal a manner.

"I enclose you a copy of my letter to the government of Bombay upon this subject. Remember, that I tell you that no person can approve of your having written the letter in question; you may depend upon it that the Governor-general will

* Hill robbers.

take the most serious notice of it ; and therefore, I again most anxiously recommend you to withdraw it."*

General Wellesley was now encamped before the strong fortress of Gawilghur, rapidly pressing the siege. Every thing appeared to go on well, and he was of opinion that he should succeed in settling a peace to the satisfaction of the government. The batteries had at length opened a breach ; and the troops were instantly ordered to the assault. After carrying the north-west gate in the most gallant manner, the wall of the inner fort was escaladed ; the gate was opened for the storming party, and the place immediately surrendered. The resistance, however, had been great, and vast numbers of the enemy fell at the different gates.† The capture of this strong fortress, and the successful progress of the campaign in other quarters, had the effect, as General Wellesley had anticipated, of bringing the war to a speedy close. The haughty Rajah was now reduced to make fresh overtures, and on the 17th of December, General Wellesley having dictated such terms as he conceived his posi-

* Camp at Ellichpoor, 6th of December. Despatches, &c.

† " When General Wellesley entered the fort, his first inquiry was for the Killadar, and he went immediately to his house. His son, a fine lad of nine or ten years of age, said he did not know where he was ; that he had gone out about two hours before, and had not returned. The poor fellow was ignorant of his fate, perhaps ; but when order was sufficiently restored to admit the inhabitants who survived to venture out, a search was made, and his body, with that of Beni Sing, was found amidst a heap of slain, near the gateway. These two men of good Rajpoot families had determined to die in defence of their trust ; and according to the custom of their country, to save their wives and daughters by putting them to death before they went out to meet their own. From some cause unknown to us this was but imperfectly performed ; of twelve or fourteen women, but three, I think, were dead when our men discovered them, and three or four more lay bleeding, having received cuts or stabs with a knife or dagger. Probably, these Rajpoots intrusted this shocking duty to hands more humane than their own. General Wellesley visited them, and ordered every respect and care to be shown to them. Beni Sing and the Killadar, however personally brave, do not seem to have been able to frame any regular plan for the defence of the inner wall, or to have infused much of their own spirit into their sepoys—the former is said to have killed or wounded two or three of our men before he fell."—*Journal of Major-general Sir J. C. Nicolls, K.C.B.*

tion and the interest of the Company entitled him to, entered into a separate treaty of peace, to be ratified by the Rajah only. With regard to this last point he showed his usual excellent tact and foresight, and in his despatch to the Governor-general, he states that the reasons for omitting to name the allies in the treaty, and to engage that they shall ratify it, will become sufficiently obvious, when the character and conduct of the government of these allies are recollected.”*

Thus at the close of an able and brilliant campaign, he compelled the haughty Rajah, in his camp at Deogaum, to submit to the terms he thought it right to exact; to renounce all adherence to the confederacy; to cede to the Company the provinces Cuttack and Balasore, and to bind himself never to keep in his service the subjects of any state which might be at war with England. This treaty, so favourable to our British interests, having been ratified, Scindiah found himself without a single ally; all his resources and expedients were exhausted, and hastening to accede to the General’s terms, another treaty was concluded, on the 30th of December, no less favourable to our colonial interests.

On the 1st of January, 1804, General Wellesley was at Pau-morg, from which place he proceeded to Manusgaum, and from thence to Rajah Pepulgaum, and on the 9th, to Jeypoor. While here, he had the satisfaction to receive the thanks of the Governor-general in council, expressing the high sense entertained by the supreme government of the judgment and ability he had manifested throughout the course of the negotiations in the consolidation of the British power and influence at the allied courts, and in our new colonial territories. The Governor-general, also, wrote to him privately in reply to his announcement of the happy event of peace with the Rajah of Berar “Your treaty,” he observes, “is wise, honourable, and glorious, and I shall ratify it the instant a copy can be made. The only article upon which I should wish any alteration, is that

* Despatches, &c. Camp at Ellichpoor, 17th of December, 1803.

respecting the admission of Europeans into the service of the Rajah. It would be more complete to exclude them altogether in peace and war, unless with the consent of the British government. But this is not an object to be placed in competition with the great advantages of this admirable treaty; the stipulations which will confer advantages on the Nizam are highly politic, and afford a splendid proof of the British faith. Upon the whole I feel the greatest pride in the treaty, and I am satisfied that it will form a brilliant point in the history of this country, and a noble termination of your military glory."*

After the close of his Indian campaigns, General Wellesley devoted much of his time to the prompt execution of the details of the several treaties, and to an extensive correspondence with the residents at different courts. Another object which he had always kept in view, but which he was now only enabled to attain in its fullest extent, was that of promoting the interests of a number of deserving officers, both civil and military, whose merits or whose claims to promotion he warmly recommended to the consideration of the Governor-general, and the honourable court. Many of those distinguished characters, with whose high reputation in arms, in letters, and in diplomatic missions, the English public has since become acquainted, pursued their early career under his eye; and, alike incited by his example and guided by his council, vied with each other in the strenuous performance of their duties. The names of Murray, Malcolm, Elphinstone, Webb, and others, who equally justified the high opinion entertained by General Wellesley of their merit, and who approved themselves so worthy of the encouragement which they received, will easily occur to the mind of every reader. The judicious choice he thus made, and the interest he took in their success, met the reward they so well merited by the manner in which the resident and other authorities now united in seconding his views, and carrying into effect with vigour and determination those stipulations necessary to the

* Dated Fort William, January 9th. Despatches, &c.

consolidation of the British dominion in pursuance of the faith of existing treaties.

Nor was General Wellesley less considerate, and even provident, with regard to the health and comfort of the officers and troops under his command. To many he gave immediate leave of absence upon the termination of the campaign, and urgently pressed upon Colonel Stevenson,—to whom, as well as to other distinguished officers, he so often expressed how greatly he was indebted for their services,—the necessity of his instant departure. “Malcolm,” he also says, “is in my opinion very unwell, and must go to England;” and on every occasion, indeed he appears to have studied how he could best promote the views of those whose good conduct he approved. It is astonishing to perceive, both during the war and subsequent to the general pacification, how, while thus laudably engaged, he carried on so extensive a correspondence with his agents and friends, and how fully he entered in his directions, not only into the general bearings but into the essential details, facts and minute particulars with which it is difficult to see when he could have made himself acquainted. The sound principles laid down, and the many excellent observations in which those able state papers, which he modestly terms “memorandums,” throughout abound, would have assuredly obtained for any less distinguished soldier and statesman that high reputation which in him appears almost obscured by the brilliancy of his greater military services.

It is proper also, here, at the close of an eventful war, to allude to the favourable impression which must be produced upon every unbiased mind by a perusal of those despatches and of those letters, which, taken as a whole, offer the best picture we can behold of General Wellesley’s feelings and real character, and which serve to raise the reader’s opinion of his nobleness of disposition, his sterling worth and talent.*

* It would be difficult to express the extent of those obligations conferred upon his country by Lieutenant-colonel Gurwood in his admirable compilation of the entire despatches and letters of his Grace, edited with a zeal and ability so honourable to him in every point of view.

From the 10th until the 14th of January General Wellesley was encamped at the bottom of the Badowlee Ghaut, where he continued to despatch those commands and directions so requisite for the due fulfilment of the newly-ratified treaties. From the last place he proceeded to Wharroor, ten miles north of Jaffierabad, and on the 18th reached Donegaon, Jalnapoor on the 19th, and on his route forwarded a detailed account of his proceedings to the Governor-general. "I am delighted," he observes, "to find that you are pleased with our battle of Argaum. I do not know whether I detailed the causes of the departure from the armistice, in that instance, in any of my public or private letters, but they appear fully on the minutes of the conferences. The fact was that Scindiah complied with none of the conditions of the armistice, which he had not ratified at that time, and I attacked him, as I gave notice to his vakeels that I should, on the preceding day. They thought he was at too great a distance from me, and the intention of both Scindiah and Vincjee Bhoonslah, in drawing up their army, and apparently offering battle, was to impose upon the troops, and induce them to believe that we wanted confidence in our own strength. They would have drawn off at night, and we should have been obliged to fight a more desperate battle, in a position more favourable to the enemy, under the guns of Gawilghur. You will see by one of the despatches which I have written to you this day, that I have arranged to send a regiment of European infantry to Fort William, and that I have provided an efficient disposable corps for Guzerat, and an European garrison for Bombay. I have written to Colonel Close to have his opinion on some points relative to the subsidiary force for the Peshwah, and as soon as I receive his answer, I shall issue orders for the establishment of it. I propose to appoint Colonel Wallace to command it till your orders shall be received. He is a brave soldier, in whom the troops have confidence. I shall leave the remains of the 74th with the subsidiary force for some time, till we see how affairs settle at Scindiah's durbar."

It appears, also, from what follows, that, in common with many officers who served during the whole of this arduous campaign, General Wellesley, though never relaxing from his active duties, was far from enjoying a good state of health. "I am much annoyed by the lumbago, a disorder to which I believe all persons in camp are liable; and if I do not go into a house soon, I am afraid I shall walk like old Pomeroy for the remainder of my life. I do not propose, however, to break up till I shall receive the ratification of the treaty of peace; although I shall have all the preparatory arrangements made, such as a subsidiary force established, &c. &c. I am now going across the Godavery, to try if I cannot surprise and cut up the banditti upon the Nizam's frontier. At all events I shall disperse them."

While thus suffering from the effect of the climate, from incessant exertion, and continual night exposure in camp, it is honourable to General Wellesley that, without taking advantage of the cessation of hostilities for his own ease and pleasure, he invariably consulted the health and feelings of those around him. "Since the receipt of your letter," he continues, "Mr. Duncan has in a manner abdicated his government. I have written to him a public and a private letter, with a view to raise his spirits a little; and yesterday I wrote him a despatch on the subject of Colonel Murray's interference in one of his financial arrangements in Guzerat, in consequence of which, Mr. Duncan acted contrary to his own judgment; in which I told him it was my opinion that you never intended he should cease his superintendence over the military affairs in Guzerat, or that he should abdicate the duties of his office. I mention this subject because I think it will require a little explanation, but I only hope that the explanation will be of a healing nature.

"I have allowed Colonel Stevenson to go to Madras for his health. He must go to England soon, or he will not live."*

* Despatches, &c. Camp, January 21st.—In a postscript to the same letter addressed to the Governor-general, the following rather amusing occurrence is related in that smart, lively manner in which General Wellesley occa-

It would not be difficult to multiply instances like these, of the disinterested kindness and consideration of General Wellesley, did not other and more important considerations press upon our immediate attention. There is, however, one other example which tends to convey so favourable an impression of his natural disposition, his good temper, and desire of serving others, that it would be almost like injustice in any biographer to pass it over; for these, indeed, are traits which ever serve as the best index to character. We have already mentioned the judicious manner in which General Wellesley appealed to the good sense of Colonel Murray, while making certain strictures with reference to an undue interference in some affairs of Mr. Duncan. He had again occasion to repeat his advice in alluding to fresh instances of Colonel Murray's want of discretion and correct feeling; advice which he gave in the most earnest and even affectionate manner.*

"I mention these subjects to you," he concludes, "because I think it very desirable, as well for yourself as for the public service, that you should draw well with the government and its servants. For my part, I shall shortly resign my charge in this part of India, and, excepting as far as my wishes may go,

sionally allowed himself to indulge. "Malcolm," he adds, "writes from Scindiah's camp, that at the first meeting Scindiah received him with great gravity, which he had intended to observe throughout the visit. It rained violently; and an officer of the escort, an Irishman (a nephew of old Becteve's, by the by), sat under a flat part of the tent which received a great part of the rain that fell. At length it burst through the tent upon the head of Mr. Pepper, who was absolutely concealed by the torrent that fell, and was discovered only after some time by an "Oh Jasus!" and an hideous yell. Scindiah laughed violently, as did all the others present; and the gravity and dignity of the durbar degenerated into a Malcolm riot—after which they all parted upon the best terms."

* The Colonel Murray to whom General Wellesley's letters were addressed belonged to the 84th regiment, afterwards rose to the rank of lieutenant-general, known as Sir John Murray; and the same, it may be recollectcd, who commanded the division of the army on the eastern coast of Spain, and for omitting taking off his cannon and baggage was subjected to the censure of a general court-martial for his conduct at Tarragona.—*Colonel Gurwood's Despatches*, vol. ii., p. 65.

I shall be indifferent to what passes. But I shall ever be sorry to hear that you misapply your talents by entering into these questions and disputes, and that you have thereby tired the government and put it under a necessity not to employ you."

The same enlarged and disinterested views, the same spirit of amity and conciliation, combined with admirable judgment, appear to have influenced him in all his arrangements with the former enemies of the Company and with its allies. In writing to Colonel Close, the resident at Poonah, from his camp at Paunchore, we find among other excellent sentiments which the letter contains, one which, in a few words, points out the true policy of the Company, in its colonial dominion, and its regulations with those whom it has subdued.

"I have received another letter and message from Baba Phurkiah; he throws himself upon the mercy of the Company, and asks only for a place in which his life will be in safety. The war will be eternal if nobody is ever to be forgiven; and I certainly think that the British Company cannot intend to make the British troops the instruments of the Peshwah's revenge. You must decide what is to be done with this person. I have ordered him to quit the Nizam's territories, and not to come near this army. The answer of the vakeel is natural. It is, 'Where is a man to go who is not to be allowed to remain in the territories of the Company, or of the Company's allies?' When the empire of the Company is so great, little dirty passions must not be suffered to guide its measures.

"I have the pleasure to inform you, that I have settled the question with the Rajah, and have given him the fort of Gawilghur."*

In his subsequent progress through the Deccan, and its chief towns and military stations, to Bombay, the presence of General Wellesley, after the ratification of the treaties of peace, was productive of the happiest effects, both with reference to the interests of the Company and of the inhabitants of the vast

* Despatches.

dominions brought under its sway. But great as were the political services he thus rendered, only surpassed by the rapid successes of that splendid campaign; and, however pre-eminently possessing those abilities which distinguish the diplomatist and the true statesman, the extraordinary and most eventful career soon opening to his view, prevents us from longer dwelling on this interesting and very important portion of his political and military life. India, indeed, was the great school of his early experience, in which the powers and resources of his vigorous intellect were brought into fuller play by the serious duties which he had to discharge, and the responsibility which attached to them. The excellence of his plans and his combinations was equalled only by the consummate skill and the energy which carried them into complete effect.

We have endeavoured to select from those ample materials furnished by himself, and recorded in our military history, those examples and traits of character which we conceived best adapted to give a just view of his system and conduct, during the early campaigns conducted under his separate command.

To follow him through his more peaceful labours, during the remainder of his brief stay in the east, when he so assiduously devoted his time to the civil and political interests of the Company, by drawing up those valuable memoranda, and suggesting those measures which, with singular sagacity and foresight, he at once saw were the best that could be pursued; and to describe his various movements, up to his return to his native land, would only be to repeat in full that of which we have already, it is hoped, given satisfactory examples, while it would also be incompatible with the plan of the present work. But while its limits, unfortunately, will not admit of that ample discussion and inquiry so requisite to place the qualities and attainments of General Wellesley, as a civil governor and a statesman, in their full light, it is, nevertheless, the duty of the biographer to state his impression that no impartial person can peruse those excellent and ably-written papers, relating to the policy and prospects of our Indian government, without

feelings of surprise at his extraordinary powers of mind, and of fresh respect and esteem for those sentiments which do equal honour to the head and to the heart of the writer.

Having repaired to Bombay in the month of April, attended by the ambassador of Scindiah and by some of the native chiefs, General Wellesley was received with the honours due to his distinguished merits, and all that respect which his regard to justice, good conduct, and real humanity—the result of admirable discipline and strong sense of duty—never fails to awaken in the popular mind. From all sides, and from every public body and profession, he received proofs, at once the most flattering and respectful, of the high estimation in which his services were held, not less as a successful soldier than an able negotiator, a prudent and upright diplomatist. In his replies to the numerous addresses which poured in upon him, he invariably observed, with that good sense combined with modesty, the characteristic of noble minds, that he owed his rapid successes not to himself but to his gallant officers and troops, and to the excellent arrangements of the civil government that co-operated with him. In addition to the usual routine of public meetings,—splendid fêtes, galas, theatricals, and illuminations, threw all the lustre of their beams, with the bright smiles of beauty round the young General, to grace his departure from that land, which, at so many risks and sacrifices, he had served so well.

But, among all the testimonials rendered to his gallant conduct and success, there was none, perhaps, which carried with it a sentiment more gratifying, or one more deeply appreciated by him for whom it was meant, than the parting address of the inhabitants of Seringapatam.

It implored the God of all castes and of all nations to hear their constant prayers for his health, his glory, and his happiness, when greater cares should call him far away from them.

A monument was erected also at Calcutta, in commemoration of the great battle of Assaye. He was presented by the citizens with a sword; and by his own officers with the very handsome

testimonial of a golden vase. In the early part of the same year, General Wellesley likewise received the thanks of both houses of Parliament for his gallant and judicious services; and on the September following, he was raised to the honours of the Bath.

In recapitulating the advantages obtained by the British forces, in which General Wellesley took so conspicuous a part, it was justly observed in the government address, that the difficult negotiations which he carried on with two hostile powers, when, at the same moment, his attention was occupied by the operations of the field, did the greatest honour to his talents as a statesman, and displayed a happy union of political skill and of military science.

"From the 8th of August," says the Marquis Wellesley, "the day on which hostilities commenced, until the 1st of November, a period short of three months, the British army had conquered all the possessions of Scindiah in Guzerat, the city of Burhampoor, the province of Cuttack, the cities of Agra and Delhi; the fortified town of Ahmednugger and the fort of Alyghur had been taken by storm, and five others reduced by capitulation. The enemy had been defeated in three general engagements at Delhi, Assaye, and Laswarrah, and had taken 268 pieces of ordnance, 5000 stand of arms, 215 tumbrels, and 51 stand of colours, with a large quantity of stores, baggage, camp equipage, and ammunition, in the field; whilst the captures in the various forts amounted to 445 pieces of ordnance, making the total number 713."

"The rapid progress and happy result of these successful operations had restored the Peshwah to his sovereign authority at Poonah, and cemented the British alliance with that prince; had secured the succession of the legitimate heir of the Nizam, protected the British interests at Hyderabad from injury, and had confirmed the treaties by which the French were expelled from the Deccan; and, finally, had delivered the aged and unfortunate Emperor of Hindostan (the descendant of a long line of Moguls) from misery and bondage. Nor were the results of

the campaign less important in a political point of view : the superiority of British discipline and valour, conducted by skilful leaders, over immense armies chiefly organized according to European tactics, had been fully demonstrated ; a just dread of its invincible character had repressed the reckless ambition and rapacity of the native princes and chieftains, whose predatory wars had laid waste the fairest provinces of India. A general confidence was excited, both at home and abroad, in the vigour of our arms, and the extent of our military resources, while the advantages so rapidly and brilliantly obtained were likely to prove permanent from the happy experience, and the consequent just and universal opinion entertained by the natives themselves, of the integrity and the mildness of British sway.”*

* It should, perhaps, be observed, that peace having been re-established by separate treaties with the confederates, the general repose was for a short time disturbed by the predatory chief Holkar, who spared neither friend nor foe, and he had actually made an attack upon his ally Scindiah's fort during the negotiations of the latter with the British. It was still an object of policy to the Marquis of Wellesley to keep him quiet, if possible ; and it was proposed to conclude an engagement with him, provided he would bind himself to abstain from any act of aggression against the British government and its allies. An amusing specimen of the weak presumption of these predatory chiefs is met with in his reply to General Wellesley, who still commanded in the Deccan. He demanded, as the price of peace, “ the cession of certain districts, and threatened that in the event of a *war* taking place, though he might not be able to oppose the English in the field, he would lay waste countries of many hundred coss (two English miles), and plunder and burn them all. That he would not allow the British Commander-in-chief to have leisure to breathe for a single moment, and that calamities should fall on hundreds of thousands of human beings, in continual war, by the desperate attacks of his *army*, which overwhelms like the waves of the sea.”

We need not say that this insolent and most ludicrous letter made no impression on the conduct of the British government, but adopting the proper measures to curb his mischievous power, sent an expedition to bring him to reason in the month of April following. It was something for Holkar that he could boast the honour of drawing the Commander-in-chief once more into the field, to try the merits of their several armies ; like Scindiah and the haughty Rajah of Berar, he too must have his British campaign. The operations were principally conducted by General Lake ; the army in the Deccan, under General Wellesley, having little more to do than to summon the strong fortress of Chandore, whose fall, speedy as it was, could add little to the splendid reputation he had already acquired. The complete discomfi-

At this period, so auspicious for the future destinies of our great empire, the Marquis Wellesley, anxious to accompany a brother, who had more than realized his proudest expectations, on his return to Europe, resigned his important duties as Governor-general, and had soon the satisfaction to learn that the Marquis of Cornwallis had been appointed to succeed him in his high and responsible trust. Preparations were made for their departure without loss of time; and, in March, 1805, General Wellesley embarked on board his Majesty's ship Trident, and

ture of the mighty Holkar's forces—overwhelming as the waves of the sea—almost immediately brought about that general pacification and submission to the British power which had been the great object of the successive campaigns.

On the 5th of March, Major-general Wellesley was invited by the officers of the garrison of Madras, to honour them with his company at a grand banquet, at which the Governor and other persons of distinction were likewise present. After dinner the following spirited song, composed for the occasion, is stated to have been sung in full chorus :

Begin the song of triumph, resound the martial strain,
To Britain's shores returning, brave Wellesley quits the plain,
Where Victory exulting, her conquering flag still rears,
And led to glory or to death her British grenadiers.

Our enemies reviving, rejoice in his return,
But soon shall fade the flattering hopes that in their bosoms burn ;
For from his great example fresh heroes still shall rise,
Nor e'er the sun of conquest set in these unclouded skies.

We mourn the gallant soldier who for his country bleeds,
But to the painful sacrifice, a balmy calm succeeds ;
And though the transient storm of war obscure the rising day,
The star of peace shall brighter shine that gilds its coming ray.

Then, Wellesley, though retiring from yon ensanguined field,
Where Mars thy might extending made Scindiah's legions yield,
So shall a livelier joy be thine, when, with protecting care,
Plenty and liberty have spread their mingled blessings there.

Then sing the song of triumph, once more the martial strain,
To Britain's shores returning, brave Wellesley quits the plain ;
A little time the Conqueror for all his toils repays,
It gives him all a soldier asks—his King and country's praise.

shortly afterwards set sail for England, where he arrived towards the close of the year.

It cannot be uninteresting to the reader, in describing the life of a distinguished soldier, to remark the manner in which he takes leave of those with whom he had shared the toils and dangers of successive campaigns. In nothing did the frank and high-minded character of General Wellesley appear more clearly than in the noble and affectionate terms in which he bids farewell to his brave companions in arms.*

“ Major-general Sir Arthur Wellesley informs the troops under his command, that he has received the permission of his Excellency the Governor-general to resign the political and military powers with which he had been lately intrusted in the Deccan, and the leave of his Excellency the Commander-in-chief to proceed to England.

“ He cannot avoid expressing the regret which he feels upon taking leave of officers and troops with whom he has served so long.

“ In the course of the period of time which has elapsed since Major-general Wellesley was appointed to a command of the division of this army, various services have been performed by the troops, and great difficulties have been surmounted, with a steadiness and perseverance which have seldom been surpassed. Upon every occasion, whether in garrison or in the field, the Major-general has had reason to be satisfied with their conduct, and he once more returns them his thanks, and assures them that he shall never forget their services, or cease to feel a lively interest in whatever may concern them.

“ He earnestly recommends to the officers of the army, never to lose sight of the general principles of the military service, to preserve the discipline of the troops, and to encourage in their respective corps the spirit and sentiments of gentlemen and of

* General order by Major-general the Hon. Sir A. Wellesley, K.B., Fort St. George, 9th of March, 1805.

soldiers, as the most certain road to the attainment of every thing that is great in their profession.

“ Upon the occasion of taking leave of the troops who have been so long under his command, Major-general Wellesley cannot avoid to notice and record the assistance which he has received from officers commanding districts and divisions under his orders

“ The troops belonging to the army in the Deccan, entitled to share in the prize-money of the late war, are informed, that measures have been taken to ensure, at an early period, the division of that part of it not yet divided.”*

* Despatches, &c.

CHAPTER IV.

(1805 to 1808.)

Returns to England—Defends his brother in parliament—Joins the expedition to Copenhagen—Siege of the city—Successes of the English—Bombardment—Success of Sir A. Wellesley in command of the troops—Returns to England—The Spanish war—Policy of Napoleon—Political retrospect—State of Spain—Parties—Intrigues—Hatred of the French—Insurrection of the people—Apply to England—Weakness of the British government—Insurrection of the Portuguese—Expedition under Sir Arthur—Progress in Spain and Portugal—Sails from Corunna—Battle of Rolica.

IN the autumn of the same year* the British government, having fitted out an expedition to proceed to Hanover, under the command of Lord Cathcart, the high reputation already acquired by Major-general Wellesley immediately pointed him out as an officer likely to confer additional honour upon the public service.† A fleet sailed from the Downs on the 4th of November, with a force of upwards of 13,000 men,

* September, 1805.

† During the interval of General Wellesley's residence in England, he was appointed to the command of a brigade in one of the home districts.

“ There is no situation, and there are no circumstances in which an officer of the army may be placed, that will not, in some manner or other, be stamped with the superior principles of the thorough soldier. An intimate friend having remarked in familiar terms to Sir A. Wellesley, when at Hastings, how he, having commanded armies of forty thousand men in the field having received the thanks of Parliament for his services, and having been made Knight of the Bath, could submit to be reduced to the command of a brigade of infantry? ‘ For this plain reason,’ was the answer : ‘ I am *nimmukwallah*, as we say in the east ; that is, I have ate of the King’s salt, and therefore I conceive it to be my duty to serve with unhesitating zeal and cheerfulness, when and wherever the King and his government may think proper to employ me.’ This maxim has the more force, from there being officers in the army who, unfortunately for them, having declined

under the command of General Don. On its arrival at Bremen, where it was received by the inhabitants with every demonstration of good-will, a proclamation was addressed, in the name of the King of England, to his Hanoverian subjects; and, on the 17th of December (Sir Arthur Wellesley having been already placed upon the staff), Lord Cathcart arrived to take the command of the troops. Unfortunately, however, the result of the memorable battle of Austerlitz rendered it prudent to recall the expedition, without an opportunity being afforded of forwarding the object which it had in view. Sir Arthur Wellesley was then appointed to the command of a district at home; and, upon the death of the Marquis of Cornwallis, was named colonel of the 33d regiment, of which he had held the lieutenant-colonelcy during the last thirteen years. Nearly at the same period he had been elected to serve in the new Parliament for the borough of Rye,* and he first rose to speak in the house upon the discussion which took place respecting Lord Wellesley's conduct in the administration of British India, when he ably repelled the attacks made upon his brother by a clear and forcible representation of the real circumstances of the case. In the year 1806 Sir Arthur Wellesley married the Honourable Catherine Pakenham, sister to the Earl of Longford, after an engagement of considerable duration, which was continued under circumstances which showed the natural nobleness of his disposition, and that high sense of honour which invariably influenced his actions.†

The experience obtained during so long a period, both of

subordinate employ, from flattering themselves with superior pretensions have repented their decision during their professional lives; and it is for this reason that the compiler has presumed to draw the attention of those who may hereafter be placed in similar circumstances, to the great military principle, as well as to the example of the Duke of Wellington."—*Colonel Gurwood's Despatches*, vol. ii., p. 616.

* Colonel Gurwood's Despatches, &c.

† It is now, we believe, pretty generally known—and there can be no motive for not making public mention of the circumstances—since the

military and civil service in India, was of essential use to General Wellesley in his character of a member of the House of Commons, and enabled him to oppose with success several measures which he conceived would be detrimental to the interests of our colonies. He showed the fallacy of the ministerial project, at that time contemplated, of transferring negro troops from the West Indies to our eastern colonies, and of replacing them by the sepoys, with the object of being thus enabled to dispense with the services of the British troops. He clearly pointed out the utter impracticability of the plan—that it must have been formed on mistaken grounds, and the absence of proper information ; that, even if practicable, it could be productive only of unfortunate consequences ; and that it was, moreover, a measure as harsh and unjust as it was impolitic. In the course of his masterly strictures, he offered a generous tribute to the character of the British soldier, no less than to the sepoys ; with regard to the last of whom, he mentioned that their removal would be a breach of good faith, as well as an act of injustice ; and the measure was, consequently, abandoned. In the subsequent motions made by the

decease of her Grace the Duchess, that, between the period of her engagement with General Wellesley and his return from India, she was seized with that cruel distemper so long the scourge of female beauty. She is stated to have at once written to release Sir Arthur from his engagement ; but, with equal magnanimity, he refused to avail himself of the permission, pressed his suit, and, on his return, was united to her. We find mention of the noble family of Pakenham, originally of Saxon descent, in the reign of Edward III. Sir Lawrence Pakenham, Kt., married Elizabeth, second sister and co-heiress of Thomas Engaine, Baron of Blatherwick, in Northamptonshire. From him sprung Sir John and Sir Hugh Pakenham, in the reign of Henry VIII., of whom the eldest was possessed of the manor of Lordington, in Sussex, and his only daughter, Constance, was married to Sir Geoffrey De La Pole, Kt., second son of Sir Richard De La Pole, and Margaret Plantagenet, only daughter of George, Duke of Clarence, brother of King Edward IV. In the course of time, Henry, the ancestor of the present family, obtained, for his services in Ireland, a grant of the lands of Tullinlally, which have since gone by the name of Pakenham Hall, in the county of Westmeath, and are still in possession of the family.

opposition, respecting his noble relative's government in India, and the manner in which some portion of the revenues had been employed, Sir Arthur Wellesley spoke with great earnestness and feeling,—with a frank decision and eloquence, rendered more impressive by his clear reasoning, and his correct enumeration of dates and facts.

In the month of April, 1807, a new administration having been formed, in which the Duke of Richmond was appointed to the Lord-lieutenancy of Ireland, Sir Arthur accepted the post of chief secretary, and was accordingly sworn one of the King's privy council. Among the first measures brought forward, as supported by him in the house, was that of a regular police for the city of Dublin ; one which, though vehemently attacked by the opposition, was successfully carried. Several other regulations proposed by him, both of a civil and municipal nature—calculated at once to conciliate and tranquillize the country—were likewise adopted, of which time and experience tended to show the advantage. But, not satisfied with advocating what he conceived to be the true policy of the administration, he made himself acquainted with the interests and wants of the Irish people, resided, during several months, in the country, and paid strict attention to every branch of his official duties. It was only for a brief period, however, that the talents of Sir Arthur Wellesley were withdrawn from the military service of his country. The ambition of Napoleon Bonaparte, incited, by a series of rapid triumphs over the allies, to fresh attempts against the commerce and prosperity of England, was now bent upon creating a power that might rival her upon the ocean. In pursuance of that gigantic delusion—the establishment of a continental system, to place Great Britain in a state of blockade by every European power—to aim a surer blow against her naval and commercial greatness, he resolved to close the Baltic against English vessels. To effect this required an act as unjustifiable as it was found to be impracticable. The British government is sup-

posed to have detected his design of seizing the Danish fleet,* with the ulterior object, it was concluded, of forming a combined navy of sufficient strength, not only to support his system of a virtual blockade, but to invade these realms. Conceiving itself justified, therefore, upon the plea of political necessity and national preservation, in anticipating the views of the enemy, our government had recourse to that extreme measure, so severely condemned by its opponents, and so deeply regretted by men of all parties. It has been observed that no armament ever sailed from the British shores, in which it was felt so painful to serve. It consisted of about twenty-seven sail of the line, and had been prepared with so much secrecy, that it had put to sea long before its destination was known. The command of the troops, amounting to 20,000 men, was intrusted to Lord Cathcart ; Major-general Sir Arthur Wellesley was at the head of the division of reserve ; while the naval part of the expedition was under the conduct of Admiral Gambier. One division of the fleet was detached to the Great Belt, with orders to blockade the island of Zealand ; the other arrived with the army in the Sound, and made ready for active operations.

In a proclamation by the Commander-in-chief, the Danes were summoned to surrender their ships, in order to avoid the effusion of innocent blood, and all the horrors of a besieged and bombarded capital. An anxiety was expressed to proceed with humanity and moderation, if the Danish government were inclined to be reasonable, and to come to an amicable arrange-

* Both at the period of the Copenhagen expedition, and long subsequently, it was a question of warm discussion, whether the English Government was in possession of information sufficiently strong to remove all doubts of Napoleon's real designs, and on which to justify, in the eyes of Europe, the alternative it adopted—on the ground of political expediency—of anticipating him in his desperate and sanguinary purpose—so clearly violating the common law of nations, and all social compacts—of possessing himself of the Danish navy, to direct it against the liberties of this country. Since the death of Napoleon, it has been stated that, among his papers, was found ample evidence that such was really his object.

ment. The object of the expedition—undertaken in self-defence, to prevent those who had so long disturbed Europe from directing the resources of Denmark against Great Britain—was explained, and the terms of surrender were exactly specified. In the event of the fleet being delivered up, a solemn pledge was held out that every ship should be returned in the same condition it then was; and that Zealand should be treated by the British forces as a province of a power the most friendly to Great Britain. “You cannot preserve your own navy” was the argument employed, “from the grasp of Napoleon, who will direct it against the independence of Great Britain: surrender it till the conclusion of a general peace; but refuse to listen to the terms we offer, and we must proceed to enforce them.” It was hardly to be expected that a nation still independent, which had done nothing to compromise its dignity or honour, and made no base concession to our implacable foe, should tamely yield up the sole power upon which that independence was founded. The answer to such a demand by any neutral or allied power which acknowledged no allegiance to Napoleon or any other potentate, was easily to be anticipated; it met our threats with a becoming spirit of defiance. “If we are not powerful enough,” it might well reason, “to defend our navy against your enemy, do not therefore destroy it, and inflict upon us that grievous injury and injustice of which you believe Napoleon to be capable. If you are correct in that supposition, it behoves the honour of a great nation to unite with the weaker in repelling so foul and unjust an attack; not to anticipate it by realizing the horrors and indignities which must attend so gross a violation of the common rights of nations, and which you would yourselves be the first to hold up to the abhorrence and execration of the world, if committed by him whom you consider the enemy of mankind.”

Having given this brief outline of the reasons and arguments employed upon both sides, previous to the bombardment of Copenhagen, it is not our intention further to pursue this painful subject. We have simply premised so much as was neces-

sary to enable the reader to comprehend the motives of the war, and those transactions in which it fell to the duty of the subject of our narrative to take an active part. He commanded in person, in the only action of importance which took place by land during this unfortunate expedition. From a despatch addressed to Lord Cathcart on the 29th of August, from the town of Kioge, it appears that in a series of attacks upon the positions of the Danes, conducted with his usual skill and vigour, he was eminently successful in all, rapidly carrying every point attacked, taking a great number of prisoners, and occupying the chief towns as he advanced into the interior of the island. "The loss of the enemy," he observes "has been very great; many have fallen, and there are nearly sixty officers and 1100 men prisoners. In their flight they have thrown away their arms and clothing, and many stands of the former have fallen into our hands. I believe that we have taken ten pieces of cannon; but I have not yet received all the reports from the detachments employed in the pursuit of the enemy. I have not seen General Linsengen, as he is still out with his hussars; but I understand that the enemy had destroyed the bridges at Little Salbye, which was the cause of the delay of his operations upon their flank."*

The progress of the other divisions of the army, though more slow, was scarcely less successful, while the attack of the sea forces was conducted with equal vigour and caution. The successive positions of the Danes having been forced, the ground occupied, the different batteries established, and every thing prepared for storming, the capital was once more summoned previous to the commencement of hostilities. This form having been complied with, and it being clearly understood on both sides that all the horrors of a bombarded city were about to begin, a flag of truce was received from General Peyman, the Danish commander-in-chief, soliciting passports for the two Princesses of Denmark to leave Copenhagen, which

* Despatches.

were granted. The Danes now made several spirited and patriotic efforts, in which not only the regular army, but citizens, students, and a number of the peasantry of the island gallantly united. More than one sortie was attempted with considerable vigour and resolution; but all was in vain, opposed to superior force and discipline, to able and experienced commanders, and to overpowering numbers of the bravest British veterans. This protracted resistance, which extorted the respect of the besiegers, while they could not but lament it, had only the effect of increasing the sufferings of the unhappy inhabitants and of their brave defenders. We would willingly draw a veil over the scenes that followed; it can answer no object at this distance of time to revive recollections, which, although most of the immediate actors in the scene have passed away, it is, perhaps, for the interest and happiness of both nations, and of all parties, to bury in oblivion.

We shall accordingly confine ourselves to simple matters of fact. On the evening of the 2d of September, the land batteries, and the bomb and mortar vessels, opened their tremendous fire upon the town. In the course of a short time a general conflagration appeared to have taken place. The fire was returned from the Danish ramparts, and from the citadel and crown batteries, but it was not long maintained with vigour. That of the besiegers also slackened on the night of the 3d, but so far from offering to capitulate, the resistance grew stronger, and all hopes of immediate surrender having disappeared, the bombardment was renewed with increased severity and effect.

Besides an immense destruction of lives and property, several of the public edifices were totally destroyed, and to rescue the capital and its numerous inhabitants from inevitable destruction, the Danish commander proposed an armistice of twenty-four hours. The armistice was declined, as tending to unnecessary delay, and the operations were pressed forward. Lieutenant-colonel Murray, however, was sent to explain that no proposal of capitulation could be listened to, unless accompanied by the surrender of the fleet. Time was now precious; honour

and patriotism had done their utmost, it would be madness longer to persevere. The Danish Prince could now negotiate for the surrender of his navy without disgrace; and it was received as the price of being delivered from the closing horrors of a bombarded city. On the 7th of September Sir Arthur Wellesley, in conjunction with other military men, drew up and signed the articles of capitulation of the town and citadel of Copenhagen, with the Danish officers deputed by General Pegmaun, the Commander-in-chief of his Danish Majesty's forces in Zealand.

In Lord Cathcart's despatch, dated from the citadel of Copenhagen, and addressed to Viscount Castlereagh, then Secretary of State, his lordship expressly states that the basis of the treaty being admitted, he had sent for Major-general Sir A. Wellesley from his command in the country, where he had distinguished himself in a manner so honourable to himself and so advantageous to the public.* In diplomacy as in war, it has been justly observed that Sir Arthur was ever prompt and decisive; the terms were discussed and settled in one night; the ratification was exchanged in the morning after; the objects of our government were unconditionally accomplished, and the gates of the capital, the citadel, and the dock-yards, were the same evening in our possession.†

* Despatches, &c., vol. ii. p. 620.

† Sherer's *Military Memoirs*, &c., vol. i., p. 70. "Even at this distance of time," says this able and very interesting writer, "we cannot record without a pang, the bombardment of Copenhagen. We reflect with no little pleasure on the fact, that during the whole of the arduous war conducted by Sir Arthur Wellesley in the Peninsula, no city was ever laid in ruins by bombardment; and important as was, in one particular instance, the speedy reduction of the fortress besieged by him, he would not resort to that extreme measure, but preferred all the inconvenience and anxiety of a delay, which greatly interfered both with the plan and prosecution of his projected operations.....Bombardment should, in these days, by a compact among civilized nations, be for ever abolished. We shudder as we read of women and children, old men and infants, slain by the sword; and exclaim loudly against the barbarities of ancient warfare. The allowed practice of bombardment realizes the same cruelties, for though the soldier does not exactly

Having returned to England, Major-general Sir A. Wellesley shortly afterwards resumed his place in the House of Commons. He was there addressed in his seat by the Speaker, on occasion of the country's thanks being returned to him and other general officers, in the following terms :

" But I should be wanting to the full expression of those sentiments which animate the use and the whole country, if I forbore to notice that we are on this day crowning with our thanks one gallant officer, long since known to the gratitude of this House, who has long trodden the paths of glory; whose genius and valour has already extended our fame and empire; whose sword has been the terror of our distant enemies, and will not now be drawn in vain to defend the seat of empire itself, and the throne of his King. I am, Sir Arthur Wellesley, charged to deliver the thanks of this House to you, and I do accordingly thank you in the name of the Commons of the United Kingdom for your zeal, intrepidity, and exertion, displayed in the various operations which were necessary for conducting the siege, and effecting the surrender of the navy and arsenal of Copenhagen."

In his reply to this high eulogium, in a manner at once modest and sensible, Sir Arthur also expressed a sentiment that cannot perhaps be too strongly impressed upon all men connected with the public service of their country; one, too, the more noble and generous, as being associated with the names of those brave officers for whom he returned thanks, and whom he had so gallantly led into action. " The honour which this House has conferred on my friends and myself, is justly considered by the officers of the navy and army as the highest which this country can confer; it is the object of the ambition of all who are employed in his Majesty's service, and to obtain it, has doubtless been the motive of many of those acts of valour

see his victims, and flesh his sword, yet, as through the long and wakeful night he serves in the batteries which throw shells among human habitations, he knows well what a scene of blood and lamentation lies beyond the wall, lofty to hide, but vain to protect, the miserable sufferers."

and good conduct which have tended so eminently to the glory, and have advanced the prosperity and advantage, of this country."

Having immediately, on his return resumed his duties as Secretary for Ireland, Sir Arthur had occasion to take an active part in the deliberations of the House, connected with Irish questions. The plans he ~~proposed~~ were uniformly of a practical character; while the expression of his views and their conciliatory tendency, did much to allay the ferment of parties. This desirable result he, of all men, perhaps, was best calculated to have produced and rendered permanent, from the high estimation in which he was held by his own party, and the respect he never failed to extort from his opponents. In the judicious and enlightened measures he at that trying period recommended, we think we may safely venture to affirm that there may be traced the same principles, the same sound sense and foresight, which ultimately decided his conduct in carrying that important act, attempted so long and vainly before by England's greatest statesmen—an act which first compensated Ireland for the Union, and made her truly an integral portion of the British empire. It was to be lamented, therefore, that with such a disposition, opposed to all harsh and violent proceedings, with relation to the welfare and stability of Ireland, the talents of General Wellesley* should so soon have been called into another sphere of action.†

* This is not a little singular, that it was only on the 25th of April, 1808, the rank of a Lieutenant-general was conferred on Sir Arthur Wellesley.

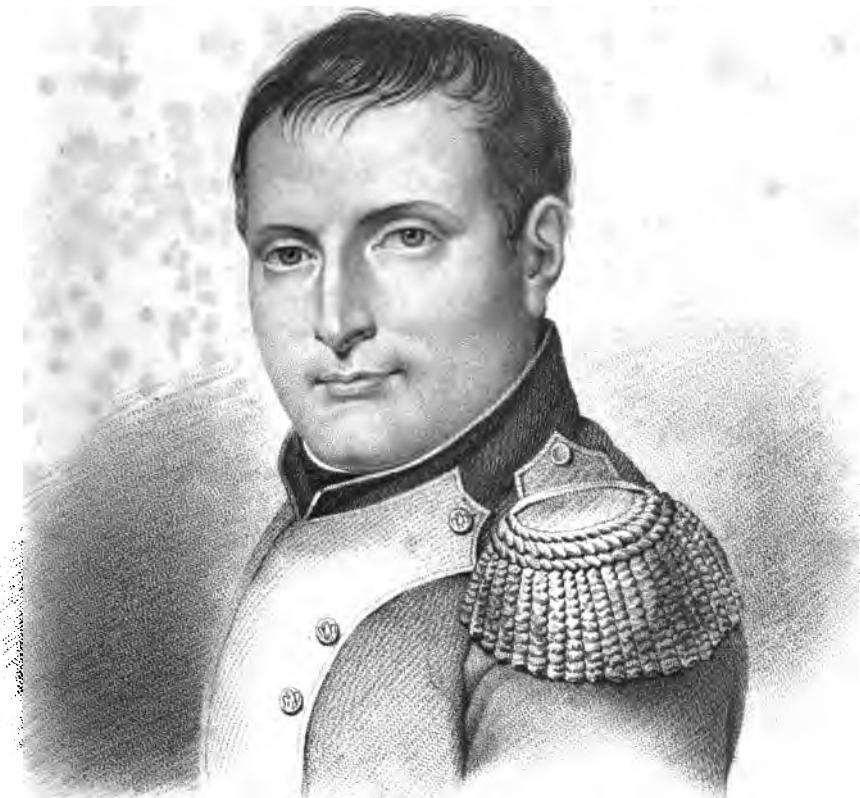
† In the spring of 1808, a force was assembled at Cork, with a view, it was supposed, towards some of the Spanish colonies of South America; but from the extraordinary changes which had taken place towards the latter end of 1807, and the beginning of 1808, in the affairs of Spain and Portugal by the French intervention, or rather invasion, of those countries, and the consequent national appeals to Great Britain for aid to rescue them from this flagrant usurpation of Bonaparte, new fields presented themselves, in which the palm of victory was to be disputed with the conquerors of Europe. The British army was now successfully to emulate the splendid fame of the navy; and during the seven following years, by its discipline and courage, under the great general who commanded it in the Peninsula, its own former proud

The imperial reign of Napoleon Bonaparte had risen upon the ruins of the French revolution. With all the powers of genius, all the resources which his ambition and success had commanded, and the most splendid opportunities that any man of ancient or modern times ever possessed of remodelling a world, creating new political and social institutions, of enrolling his name among the greatest liberators, the best benefactors of mankind, he chose the broad and beaten way of royal aggrandizement. Impelled by grasping selfishness, and turning traitor to the character of his times and the republican genius of the great people he professed to govern, he leagued with the oppressors instead of the oppressed, became the ally of all, except England and her freedom, and thus provoked and merited the fate which at length overtook him.

At this moment, intoxicated with a series of military successes unprecedented in the annals of war, he no longer masked his inordinate ambition. He burned to dictate submission to the British government by means of Russia, Portugal, and Spain. Up to the period of the peace of Tilsit, true policy had actuated him in his brilliant career, and he had become at once the master and the ally of every European power, except Great Britain. His fortunes had reached their zenith, and it was justly observed by the most sagacious politician of the age,* that every new attempt to advance further must necessarily be a step downward—a prediction amply verified by the subsequent invasions of Spain and Russia. An opposite line of policy, directed to defending and strengthening the position he

days of Cressy, Poitiers, Agincourt, Blenheim, and Ramillies were to be eclipsed by the still prouder successes which now annually followed, to be finally crowned by the most triumphant and decisive victory gained in modern times at the great battle of Waterloo.—*Col. Gurwood's Despatches, &c.*

* The late prince Talleyrand, who, it is well known, was the secret adviser of Napoleon's measures, and some of those *coupes d'état* which had signalized the character of his diplomacy, in his negotiations with other powers. "You would do well to stop," was the laconic counsel of the wily statesman; "you have attained the top step in your ascent, and every move you make must be one downward."



NAPOLÉON.

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had already occupied, and to avoiding too extended a frontier, a maxim as applicable to political as to military warfare, would have proved far more detrimental to the interests of Great Britain. By deciding upon a different course, in opposition to his wisest counsellor, he threw down the gauntlet of defiance to Europe and to the world. He staked all upon one grand cast; risking brilliant qualities, military power, and science, to achieve universal dominion, against the love of national preservation and all sound principles of action. He finally encountered talent equal to his own, animated by a high sense of duty and integrity of purpose—and he lost. The genius of Napoleon withered under the star of Wellington.

From the period of the accession of the house of Bourbon to the throne of Spain, that nation continued the natural ally of France; and her comparative weakness rendered her at once submissive and instrumental to the views of the stronger. After the fall of the French Bourbons, circumstances made it imperative on the Spanish court to observe a neutral aspect; and, having witnessed and experienced all the superiority of the republican arms, was glad to maintain the same friendly appearances when wielded by a Napoleon. His will had become a law; and, under the weak government and corrupt court of Charles IV., it would have been pronounced madness to expose Spain to a contest which had destroyed the independence of the great powers of Europe. Before she had been driven into hostilities with England, she possessed a navy, colonies, and commerce; but now, while the most shameless profligacy and corruption prevailed in every department of the state, her decreasing energies, the rapacious spirit of her haughty ally, and the depredations of her enemies, had exhausted the public treasury, her credit was at the lowest ebb, and she was a prey at once to tyranny and incapacity.

The designs of Napoleon had been some time matured, and the fate of Spain decreed, before a favourable opportunity for effecting them had presented itself. Deterred from proceeding in an open manner to the attainment of his object, by a sense

of its glaring injustice, and some regard to public opinion and appearances, he sought to accomplish it by diplomatic means, and by taking advantage of the errors and dissensions of existing parties. He was not long without a pretext for more active interference ; and the same fortune that had so signally favoured his arms seemed at length to smile upon his favourite project.

During the successful campaign against Prussia, Godoy, the real head of the Spanish government and the profligate minion of the queen, had the imprudence to correspond with the court of Berlin, and presumed even to issue a proclamation calling upon the people to respect the national independence, to rely more upon themselves and less upon foreign alliance. So novel a doctrine was at once interpreted into a design of shaking off the costly alliance of France ; and had not the battle of Jena shown the wildness of so idle a scheme, it is probable that Godoy would have attempted to form a new league and join the enemies of Napoleon.

Had the conqueror of Jena, on a knowledge of this fact, turned his arms directly against Spain, he would have, perhaps, excited less public obloquy than by adopting covert measures, and endeavouring to obtain, by diplomatic guile, what he might then have more justifiably seized by force. As he was desirous, however, of placing the crown upon the head of one of his own family, he, doubtless, considered it expedient not to excite the national prejudices and opposition of a people like the Spaniards by open aggression ; though, at the same time, he took the most active measures to incapacitate them for resistance, should such a necessity arise.

He required a large contingent of troops to assist in his campaign against the Swedes supported by the English ; and the best troops of Spain, commanded by Romana, were sent into Denmark. He next entered into a secret treaty with Charles, for the partition of Portugal ;* a third share of which was intended to form a principality for Godoy, another for the Queen

* On the 29th of October, 1807.

of Etruria, and the last, with the city of Lisbon, to be reserved for France. With these views Napoleon first exacted from the house of Braganza the immediate renunciation of British alliance, the confiscation of property, the imprisonment of British residents, the entire adoption, in short, of the new continental system.

In pursuance of the treaty ratified at Fontainbleau,* a force of 28,000 French, and 27,000 Spanish troops, received orders for the immediate occupation of Portugal; a fresh army of 40,000 was to form a reserve at Bayonne, ready to advance, in case of resistance on the part of the Portuguese assisted by the English fleet. Junot marched rapidly through Spain, where he was joined by the Spanish forces on the frontier of Portugal; and, by the particular command of the Emperor, he pressed forward, by forced marches, to reach the devoted city. The ports were now closed against the British flag; but, to the last moment, the English ambassador and the admiral, finding all opposition hopeless, recommended the instant embarkation of the royal family, with a view of flying to the Brazils.

It was not, however, till the French had arrived within a few hours' march of Lisbon, that so decisive a step as expatriation, and the abandonment of the government and the people, was adopted,—till the fearful edict of Napoleon met his eye, that "the house of Braganza had ceased to reign," and the prince lost no time in soliciting the protection of England, against whose flag his own ports were even now shut. It was granted by those who had before tried to inspire him with nobler resolutions, and throw himself on the spirit of the people. And it was still more the subject of regret, when, only a few hours after he had sailed, there appeared at the gates, a body of weak and worn-out troops, such as a small portion of the inhabitants—to say nothing of the soldiers headed by English sailors—might easily have driven from the walls. Panic struck, surprised, and betrayed, the people beheld Junot, at the head of a few wretched conscripts,

* Annals of the Peninsular Campaigns, vol. i., p. 29.

take possession of their city, disarm the Portuguese garrison, and establish guards and pickets as over a conquered town.

But when the French commander gave orders to take down the arms of Portugal, and substitute those of the conqueror, a ferment rose in the streets; but new troops pouring in, it was, in a short time, quelled. From that moment Junot took effectual measures to prevent the recurrence of such an attempt; a number of nobles and the middle and upper classes went over to the French, and joined in their plans of organizing a new government; but the national pride and independence still manifested themselves in the secret curses and exasperation of the people.

Although the French commander had thus easily accomplished the object he had in view, Napoleon gave orders for the reserve to march into Spain. It was divided into two bodies, commanded by Moncey and Dupont; and another corps, led by Duscheme, advancing across the Pyrenees, entered Barcelona and other strong places, so that the entire country commanding the main roads from France to Madrid was already in possession of Napoleon.

The court of Madrid, distracted by parties, witnessed the occupation of the country without an effort to arrest its fate. Ferdinand, Prince of Asturias, engaged in plots against his own father, was ambitious only of forming a matrimonial alliance with the conqueror; while Charles and Godoy, the favourite, solicited his aid to punish the treason of the son. The Emperor, by amusing both parties, gained time to secure a firm foundation for his intended conquest, and to repress any movement on the side of a proud and hostile people. On learning, however, the events in Portugal, the court was seized with sudden panic, and took measures to withdraw to Seville, with a view of sailing for the American colonies. Rumours of such an intention, studiously aggravated by the prince's party, excited the utmost indignation among the people; a violent mob surrounded the palace at Aranjuez, and demanded, with savage threats, an assurance that the royal

family would not remove; and, in a similar manner, the riot spread to Madrid, where the populace attacked and plundered the house of Godoy, and would have sacrificed the haughty favourite to their fury. He was saved only by being thrown into prison; and the same scenes being continued and aggravated by the arts of Ferdinand, his unhappy father, alarmed at all he saw and heard, suddenly abdicated the throne.

Immediately on this event, the Prince of Asturias was proclaimed King of Spain, and scenes of violence and rapine were succeeded by popular rejoicings and festivities. Murat, Grand Duke of Berg, having been appointed commander-in-chief, on hearing what had occurred, broke up his quarters at Aranda de Duero, and marched upon Madrid. Leaving 30,000 men in observation, he entered the city with only 10,000; and he here received a communication from the deposed monarch, entering his protest against his own abdication, on the ground of its having been forced upon him by treachery, and the terror of the moment. When Ferdinand, next day, made his public entry, the French commander refused to acknowledge his title; and Ferdinand had the baseness to try to conciliate him by presenting to him the sword of Francis I., reserved as a trophy of his capture at the battle of Pavia. Murat accepted the offer, but declared that in a matter of such grave import, it would be necessary to abide the decision of his imperial master.

Napoleon expressed himself more displeased with his general than with Ferdinand; his grand plan was not yet matured, and he instantly despatched Savary to remedy the ill effects of Murat's impetuosity. Never, perhaps, were three parties more peculiarly and awkwardly circumstanced, whether with reference to each other, or to the people, whom it was the object of each to betray. The traitor Ferdinand, with the populace in his favour, was denounced as an usurper by Charles; the latter was unable to resume his authority, or obtain the support of his ally; and the French having committed one false step, were already involved in the conse-

quences, beyond the power of recall. In that error we trace the germ of the terrific wars that so long desolated Spain; by proceeding too rapidly, and failing to conciliate the people through their favourite Ferdinand, Napoleon, who, too late, saw the danger, raised a host of prejudices; armies of priests and their flocks, far more difficult to subdue than all the veteran legions of the allies arrayed against him. To withdraw Murat from the capital while Ferdinand remained, acknowledged king by the public voice, within its walls, would have been to admit the validity of his title; to continue to occupy it while he was present, was to excite the passions of the people; and being once compromised by his general, Napoleon committed another grievous error, in attempting to accomplish secretly that which he was afraid to do openly. By a system of deception, not less refined than his own, Ferdinand was induced, at the instigation of the French agent, to take a journey to Burgos, in the belief that he would there be received by Napoleon. He proceeded, under the same deception, as far as Vittoria; and he was now at no great distance from Bayonne. It was ingeniously suggested by Savary, that the longer the way he went, the more sure he would be of engaging the confidence and friendship of the Emperor, already so favourably disposed to his cause; Ferdinand assented; but the populace became clamorous, to prevent the departure of their new monarch; and they took the most effectual means, by cutting the traces of his carriage. He so little, however, relished the compliment, that he insisted on joining Napoleon; dined at the imperial table; and, after being received with every demonstration of respect, was, with equal politeness, informed by Savary, the same evening, that he was a prisoner, and repeating the pleasant information so recently conveyed to the house of Braganza—that the Bourbon dynasty had also ceased to reign in Spain.

That neither party should have reason to complain of the harsher usage of the Emperor, he resolved to place them on precisely the same footing; and took measures, with Murat,

to have the persons of the King, the Queen, and the favourite Godoy secured, and conveyed out of the kingdom. To the King he assigned a retreat, with a moderate pension, in a pleasant part of Italy; and he made an ample provision for the Queen and her favourite, whom he permitted to reside anywhere out of Spain.

The outline of the grand plan, which Napoleon himself had deemed almost impracticable, and which both Talleyrand and Fouché had denounced as fraught with evil and destruction, had, in so far, been executed, and there were only required the usual details to fill it up. Napoleon was master of Spain and Portugal; his troops garrisoned their strongest fortresses, and held the keys of both kingdoms. French governors issued their commands in the name of their imperial sovereign, over the prostrate authorities of Lisbon and Madrid; and French soldiers looked down with contempt from the walls of towns and strongholds on the sullen features of the discontented citizens and peasantry. Squadrons of French horse paraded the streets of the Spanish capital; the foundations of a new throne appeared to be firmly secured. Each of the rival interests that could have laid claim to the crown, had either abdicated or assigned away its rights,—there was a vacuum to be filled,—both nations were at his mercy, and it was not difficult to find a new king. But a sudden and fearful change was at hand. Napoleon, absorbed in his military calculations, had invariably forgotten or despised—the people. In his views they had no existence—no rights separate from military glory, the triumph of the French eagles—the aggrandizement of his own and his soldiers' fame. Like the other despotic actors in the scene, he had underrated, in the same way, the moral dignity and force of the Spanish character; national independence, religion, habits, feelings, and social ties, were all to be remodelled or extinguished, to form a new dynasty, and a new order of things. No nation had ever suffered greater wrongs at the hands of a corrupt court, a haughty and oppressive aristocracy, and a cruel, profli-

gate, and anti-christian hierarchy, than the Spaniards. They had nobly bled in the great cause of national independence, wrested, after ages of fierce warfare, from the Moors ; they had vindicated, at the point of the sword, the respective privileges of their nobles and their priests. And what was their reward ? The horrors of the inquisition, a cruel and oppressive despotism, and the burden of a haughty aristocracy, which bound them to the earth. But there survived from the old free states, a spirit of freedom never entirely quenched ; they never forgot, in their loyalty, the early laws and customs, and the peculiar privileges of different states ; privileges which the leaden sceptre of their oppressors wished to beat down into one mass of barbarism and abject submission.

The fall of a succession of abandoned ministers, of heartless ecclesiastics and nobles, bears testimony in Spanish history to the resolute and fiery temper of the people, when once the last strongholds of independence are invaded, and they are goaded by oppression into the assertion of its power. The fall of Godoy was only another example of that spirit which spurned the creature, while it reverenced the power of the King : hence their hopes of Ferdinand and a new reign. They hated faction, while they respected monarchy ; and commotions, without revolution, broke out in every part of the kingdom. When it became too apparent that Charles IV. had become the blind instrument of a worthless minion, the insulted people no longer recognised him in the royal power ; their petitions rejected, they rose to take vengeance upon the wrong doer, and by their formidable attitude, terrified the weak monarch to resign in favour of his untried and more artful son. With the sanguine temperament of the South, though again and again deceived and betrayed, they looked on the fall of Godoy and the elevation of Ferdinand at once as a triumph and a remedy for the ills and sufferings they endured.

At this eventful moment, when the public mind was in the utmost agitation, Murat entered like a conqueror into the

capital of the new king. The people immediately took the alarm; France was in strict alliance with their government; there existed a treaty binding them closely to each other, by the partition of the kingdom of an old hereditary foe; yet that ally refused to recognise their sovereign; and instead of public rejoicings, the people were seen gathered in small groups, through the streets, with chilled looks and earnest gesture, communing with each other. French guards and horsemen patrolled the streets. What then were their feelings as they listened to the tidings hourly brought in,—of the sudden disappearance of Ferdinand,—the flight of Charles IV., and the liberation of the hated Godoy,—when they beheld Murat at the head of the new junta, guarded by French soldiers, and fresh troops pouring in.

Next came intelligence from the provinces of the treacherous occupation of cities and fortresses; of the deposition of the Bourbon dynasty, and foreign possession of almost the entire country, under the specious veil of alliance, by the soldiers of revolutionary France. Muleteers, peasants, citizens,—even the women and children,—abandoned their peaceful labours, and were seen congregated round the images of their saints, weeping, praying, and vowed revenge.

The first serious disturbance was at Toledo, 1806, where large numbers of peasants had collected; and the first note of that eventful war, on which we are about to enter, was the muster of Dupont's division, which, entering the city, restored order and dispirited the insurgents. This did not arrest the progress of events at Madrid. On the 2nd of May, early in the morning, a crowd collected round the palace, eagerly eyeing one of the old-fashioned carriages, which it was reported was there to convey Don Antonio, the last of the Spanish princes, to visit Napoleon at Bayonne. There was no authority for the rumour, but it had gone forth, and the most lamentable consequences ensued. The populace instantly cut the traces, dragged the carriage back, and burst into the most furious imprecations

against the French. On the approach of a party to ascertain the cause of the riot, they were fiercely attacked. More soldiers and more people hurried to the conflict; and soon from every quarter of the city the populace fell on single men, or groups of French, and sacrificed them on the spot. There was no weapon they did not seize; no mode of death which the enraged mob scrupled to inflict. Some of the French were stabbed; others stoned; many were killed in the houses, and more from missiles of every kind hurled upon them from above. The onset appeared to be the more furious from its being unpremeditated, and was continued with unabated fury during several hours. It was aggravated, also, by a knowledge that the enemy had the will and the power to take as deadly a revenge. It was this war to the knife which rendered the people dead to all appeals of humanity and honour; they attacked the French hospital and barbarously put numbers of defenceless victims to death.

At the same time, this was not the work of Spanish soldiers, who remained closely shut up in their barracks; it was the war-cry of the inhabitants, in the country whom a military conqueror had held too cheap, and who were destined to prove his most fatal enemies.

There were sufficient indications, also, that, had Spanish soldiers been brought into action, they would have embraced the popular side, and some officers placed on duty showed the prevailing spirit of nationality. While in guard of the artillery at the arsenal, the shouts of the fierce conflict told them the work of death was begun; soon they came nearer—a French column was advancing to the support of their countrymen, and one of their first objects was to cut off the supply of arms, and they approached to secure them. In a moment the guns were brought forth, loaded and turned in the direction of the enemy.—They began to play, and continued to do so until the two officers who directed them fell. One was shot dead; and the other, after being wounded, continued to give fresh orders until he

expired. The French cavalry were ordered to charge through the streets, and numbers of the people were either taken prisoners or slain.

Intelligence of the rising having reached the surrounding districts, thousands of the peasantry rushed in throngs towards the city gates. While endeavouring to force their way, they were charged by the French guards, and, after a desperate slaughter, dispersed; yet, on the next morning, they returned, and were again routed.

Among the prisoners taken during these conflicts, which ultimately roused the entire country to arms, were some citizens, retired officers, and even strangers, who had been unwillingly compromised by being present in the conflict. A military commission was appointed, and one hundred were ordered to be executed in the Public Walk. It has been stated with reference to this sanguinary measure, that it was undertaken without the knowledge of Murat by the inferiors in command, who gave no time for the respite, granted at the earnest appeal of the whole municipality, to arrive. The loss of the French in this first attack was estimated at not less than five to seven hundred; while that of the people was computed at less than half that number. This singular disproportion between the two parties was accounted for by the French having in the commencement been exposed singly, or in small groups, to the fury of the mobs.

It is strange that, after such evident proofs of the animosity of the inhabitants, the French commander took so few precautions to prevent a repetition of the same scenes. Having put down the rising in the city, and driven the peasantry from its gates, he seemed to conceive the matter as at an end. But already the system of secret assassination, of cutting off the officers and soldiers in isolated parties, was actively at work, thinning the ranks of the French.

The populace soon becoming bolder, commenced a general attack, and, before Murat, taken by surprise, had beaten to arms, were already in possession of many parts of the city.

Putting himself at the head of a squadron of horse in the square of the palace, he gave orders for the reinforcements outside to advance; and, at the same time, the imperial guard cleared the main streets, and formed upon the open space in the Puerta del Sol, while another strong body occupied the street of San Bernardo, so as to command the arsenal. To put a stop to the indiscriminate slaughter, the municipal authorities appeared along with the French generals, and, traversing the public places, they bore white flags, and conjured the people to retire. Gradually the fury of the tumult ceased.

After this fresh excitement was allayed, measures were taken of a different character to the last; a military tribunal, invested with full powers, was ordained, and every thing assumed a purely military aspect; an order of the day was issued to forbid the meeting of more than eight Spaniards in the street; every village in which a French soldier was assassinated was to be razed, and every publisher, writer, or distributor of tracts, or addresses leading to disturbance and revolt, to be instantly seized and shot.

The French commander next hastened to the new junta, assumed the office of president, and directed means for extending and enforcing the laws necessary to support the authority already established on the principle of force and terror.

At the tidings of what had passed at Madrid, city after city, and province after province caught the prevailing spirit, and fear, rage, or desperation was alternately depicted on the countenance of the speaker, as he spread through groups of mournful listeners the disastrous intelligence of their countrymen's fate. All the old prejudices against France;—the recollection of the insults and sufferings long borne—revived in full force; and the flame of war, the burning desire of revenge at any price, were kindled in every bosom; and without a single declaration of the governments, while they were apparently acting in concert together—France and Spain from that moment were at deadly war.

The scenes which necessarily ensued from so unhappy a

combination of causes and circumstances which no party could longer control—much less foresee the consequences of—may almost be better imagined than described. Acts which, in a different state of things, would have been punished as murder; assassination, and treachery; the most revolting cruelty and outrages of every kind, became justified in men's own eyes, by the delusion of national freedom and patriotic revenge; and a host of evil passions, fostered by bad men of every party for the most selfish purposes, were let loose upon society; and the secret informer, the betrayer of hospitality, innocence, and friendship, the purjurer, and the assassin, and bands of mountain robbers, were to become henceforth the instigators of confusion and anarchy. The most sacred bonds of society were broken and trampled under foot. Such were among the results of one unprincipled act of aggression and injustice on the part of Napoleon. It was only one so powerful to do evil—to wield his fierce despotism with a strong hand, who could thus shake the foundations of the monarchy and the people to their centre; and it was only one other, supported by a power more concentrated and vigorous than his own—Wellington and the might of England—that could rescue and save, extinguish the flames of discord and the horrors of such a war.

In the same simultaneous outbreak—at Cadiz, Seville, Cartagena, Toledo, Vittoria, Valencia, Barcelona—at inferior towns and other places—both the French and their Spanish partisans, whether favourable to Napoleon or to the old regime of Charles IV., were, without distinction, barbarously assassinated. The cry of “Traitor” raised for any purpose to gratify private revenge or passion of any kind, placed every individual in the power of another who might wish to deprive him of property or life. Names the most illustrious, services the most zealous, integrity, honour, and patriotism the most tried, were no longer a safeguard for Spain's noblest sons. The lamented fall of the Conde De Aguilar, and of Solano, were only examples of the terrific system so deeply rooted by a series of fatal events such as we have described. Numbers of other innocent and high-minded

men were soon sacrificed to the madness of the multitude, and the wickedness of its instigators and abettors. There were even ecclesiastics, who exchanging the cross for the dagger, led on the fanatic populace to the work of slaughter—as in the French revolution—of all men of liberal feelings, rank and wealth; and in the city of Valencia, scenes of this kind were continued for a period of twelve days.

After exhausting the merciless fury of the mobs upon the best and bravest patriots of Valencia, the wretched fanatic and ringleader, Calvo, and his followers, became the victims of their own crimes. On recovering some degree of reason, the people, shocked at the excesses they beheld, turned their arms against their betrayer, and having first imprisoned, strangled him along with his vilest associates. The cruelty and ferocity attending these popular tumults, thus directed by the worst characters to the most criminal purposes—to the destruction of the cause in which they first originated, and were bound to support, gave no slight advantage to the enemy.

Napoleon, on first hearing of the riots at Madrid, is stated to have remarked, that “ Murat was going wrong and too fast;” but, subsequently, the success of his arms, and the wild sanguinary spirit of these last excesses, sweeping off the ablest and best Spaniards, were circumstances as favourable to him, as fatal to the triumph of national independence; and he now reposed securely upon a knowledge of his own power, his increasing influence and resources. He resolved, at all hazards, to persevere.

One result of the unchecked violence of the populace, was the formation of provincial and local juntas, invested with power to raise money and levy troops. In the seaports, they opened communications with the English fleets upon the stations; they appointed deputies, some of whom proceeded to England to seek the support of the government. The sentiments of the people were evidently in favour of Ferdinand VII., of peace with Great Britain, and war to the knife—as they truly described and practised it—with the French.

While the country was thus engaged on one side; the nominal government—the council of Castile and the authorities of Madrid—on the other, proceeded, at the mandate of Napoleon, to appoint a new king to fill the vacant throne. Their choice, of course, fell upon Joseph Bonaparte—a choice to which, singularly enough, a Cardinal Bourbon, Primate of Spain, and first cousin to Charles IV., and Archbishop of Toledo, at once acceded, and addressed a congratulatory letter to Napoleon.

The intended king, who had already reigned at Naples, arrived at Bayonne on the 7th of June. On the 15th there was an assembly of notables, composed of nearly a hundred Spaniards of rank, who acknowledged Joseph as their king; deliberated on the constitution submitted to them by the Emperor, and accepted it in due form. The new monarch, attended by an escort of troops, then set out for his capital, where he arrived without interruption of any kind. He was proclaimed with the usual formalities, by the title of *King of Spain and the Indies*; the city and all public places were securely guarded, and resounded with peals of the French artillery.

CHAPTER V.

(1808 to 1814.)

New character of the war—Assistance of the English—They prepare to act—Weakness of the British government—Difficulties to encounter—Movements in Portugal—In Spain—General Wellesley prepares to take the command of the new expedition—His conduct as chief secretary of Ireland—Arrives at Corunna—His unremitting exertions—Decides upon landing in Portugal—His prompt and able measures counteracted by the Portuguese general—Overcomes all difficulties—Proceeds down the Tagus—Correspondence with government, &c.—With Sir H. Burrard—Dispositions for battle—Strictures upon the Portuguese—Defeat of the French at Rolica—Noble traits of conduct—Importance of the victory—Advance of the British general.

THE repression of outrages and the favourable effect of local juntas soon gave another aspect to the war. The movement, instead of being confined to mobs and the lowest refuse of society, to fanatic priests and interested characters, took a more calm direction in the leading cities and provinces. The mountain districts of the Asturias rose in mass, and not less than 40,000 men, it was rumoured, were assembled to oppose the entrance of the French. Two Spanish noblemen were instantly despatched to the British government with intelligence of this gratifying fact; while the Spaniards in the south gave the same favourable representations of the progress of affairs to Sir Hugh Dalrymple, then at Gibraltar, and to Lord Collingwood stationed on the eastern coast. From both these officers they received the required aid, for the war no longer consisted of sudden ebullitions and cries of vengeance.

We may estimate the importance of this change by the capture of the French squadron constrained to surrender at Cadiz

on the 6th of June. This event was followed by a peace with England, and as the Spaniards were vauntingly accustomed to say "*war with all the world besides.*" Spanish prisoners were immediately liberated, and enabled to give assistance to their country. The English people likewise sympathized in the wrongs of Spain; and no more threatened with invasion, or possessed with a belief of the invincible nature of French soldiers, at one time so predominant, after the brilliant successes of the republican and imperial arms, they became eager for the continuance of the war, and no less sanguine of immediate triumph over the veteran armies of the conqueror. They did not bear in mind that he had at this moment no fewer than 120,000 chosen men in Spain and Portugal; that they were in possession of the country and the fortresses of the latter, and of all the chief cities and stations throughout Spain. Napoleon, moreover, was provided with a reserve of as many more at Bayonne, and France and her dependencies contained armies amounting to 400,000 veterans, ready to march on any point at the voice of their imperial master.

This representation will convey some idea of the gigantic task in which England was now preparing to engage, and of the genius and resources necessary to cope with a commander like Napoleon, and his well-trained generals, in such a war.

The military character of England, high as it had stood in various periods in our annals, within the last half-century, had, from numerous causes, suffered in the estimation of the great European powers. The ill success attending the expeditions into Holland, at Walcheren and other parts; the new tactics and dazzling conquests of the French; the system we still persevered in, with the old exploded rules; the corruption and favouritism which so widely prevailed, were all injurious to the physical strength and moral influence of the British army. A reform in every department was in fact requisite before it could be rendered an efficient arm capable of being wielded for active foreign service. The government had no just ideas of the real power and capabilities of Great Britain, under a reformed system,

with leaders of talent, a new commissariat, greater economy, a more correct discipline, and the repression of gross abuses. Though warlike, the ministerial views were confined within the scope of a little war. Its most sanguine partisans were as little disposed to venture a British army against the veteran legions of Napoleon, as the latter to command his fleets to blockade our ports; and the military power of the one, and the naval supremacy of the other, may be said to have stood in pretty nearly the same estimation with regard to each other. Though some of the French admirals, and the captains of men-of-war, had performed gallant exploits, France could not cope with England by sea; and though Abercrombie, Moore, Hutchinson, and other generals had, in several conflicts, sustained the honour of the British arms, their laurels failed to raise the opinion of a military power capable of meeting the armies of France.

When the occasion, therefore, offered of making Spain the arena of a new species of conflict with Napoleon—on which to decide the great question of national independence, instead of on our own shores, the British government felt in the predicament of a man suddenly awakened to the combat out of his sleep. They had to dress and arm, and were at a loss how to summon at once the strength which they possessed. They knew not how, where, or on what scale to act. They were not even sensible of the advantages they possessed,—of the real strength and improved discipline of the British forces, derived from the laudable and persevering exertions of the Duke of York. The answer they made to the Spanish deputies was in accordance with their limited and mistaken views; their voice was still for war, and they responded to the Spaniards' resolution of “war to the knife.” Yet their policy was not equal to their will, and they wanted judgment and decision. The great sinews of war, indeed—money, they had got; but promptness, energy, and unanimity, they had none. Distracted councils, feeble efforts, and consequent failures, compromised the most distinguished generals and the noblest

troops the world ever saw. The high-minded Moore, like Abercromby, both worthy to be placed by the side of the best generals of antiquity, may justly be said to have fallen a sacrifice to want of official experience, and confidence in the military resources of the country. When at length ministers saw their error, and endeavoured to repair it, the great Wellington himself found the utmost difficulty in obviating the peril and ruin of the cause, to say nothing of the weakness and ill-faith of our allies; evils from which only his indomitable patience and perseverance could have rescued him. Thus the certain losses incurred, and the enormous sums lavished so long after the opening of the Peninsular war, were mainly attributable to the timidity of men ignorant how to direct the strength they possessed; of men who, when they might have wielded an active, disposable force of 75,000 men, under commanders such as Sir John Moore and Sir Arthur Wellesley, acted as if they were afraid to confide in them; and chose to employ less than half that number, under leaders as inferior to them in genius and capacity, as they were in experience and hard service. The logic of such reasoning, exhibiting an infatuation that can never sufficiently be deplored, amounted to this: in our opinion, and that of our council of war, it is possible to attain a given object with 30,000 men, commanded in part by generals of doubtful ability; which it is very questionable whether 70,000, headed by those of the highest reputation and splendid services, can carry to a prosperous result.

But the facts stated in the course of the present narrative will sufficiently illustrate the truth of these observations, without going into general reflections and assertions, instead of proofs adduced. Those proofs will best be supplied by recounting the actions of the subject of these memoirs, exhibiting how greatly the results of this terrific contest were effected by the genius of one man, which, notwithstanding the disadvantages we have stated, accomplished the independence of

two nations of the Peninsula, upon the point of being arrayed in direct hostility to Great Britain.

Simultaneous with the movements in various provinces of Spain, were manifestations of the same spirit throughout Portugal; a disposition ably promoted by the judicious conduct of the English admiral, Sir Charles Cotton, and the most amicable relations may be said from this period to have been formed between these powers and Great Britain; and they were rapidly followed by a series of important events, in which the British government ought to have assumed a lead which was left to chance, and the efforts of a wild, isolated patriotism, that ought earlier to have obtained its support. The battle of Baylen in the province of Andalusia—the surrender of the army under Dupont—the repulse of General Moncey, and of large bodies of French, by Spanish citizens, in almost every quarter, at this auspicious moment, were the work of the Spanish people, unsupported by any ally.

While General Moncey was driven with slaughter from Valencia, the exploits of Saragossa became the theme of every tongue, and maidens, priests, and old men, performed deeds that made the heroic times of antiquity seem no longer a fable. At Girona the monks flew to arms, and the battle of Cabezon and Medina del Rio Seco alarming the new king for his safety, he abruptly left Madrid. General Duhesme had difficulty in repressing the spread of the insurrection through all Catalonia, and his severity and cruelty in and round Barcelona only retarded the hour of vengeance, and added to the horrors of the war. A new accession of strength also invigorated the hopes of the patriots in the return of the veteran troops from the north of Germany. Thus there were many circumstances which, notwithstanding the superiority of French skill and discipline, proved favourable to the cause of the patriots, who, though almost invariably beaten in general engagements, rose, undaunted by their defeats, and harassed or cut off the enemy in separate parties. Worsted as they had been in Navarre and Biscay, at Logrono, at Torquemada, and at Segovia, and terrified

into submission for the moment, the northern patriots rallied again and again under Blake and Cuesta. Inflamed by the desperate courage of Palafox, a noble and a soldier, the people made a stand at Tudela, and disputed the passage of the Ebro. They were routed ; and in the same manner on the Huecha and the Xalon, till, on the 15th of June, the French took up their position before the walls of Saragossa. The memorable siege that ensued, and the heroic efforts and sufferings of the inhabitants, are already too well known. The undaunted Palafox raised another army, and fought a battle at Epila, where, though defeated, he threw himself into the city, and assisted by a popular leader of the lower orders named Tio Jorge, or uncle George as he was familiarly termed, he contested every foot of ground till the place was nearly reduced to a heap of ashes. Such was the desperate energy of the besieged, that the French commander was constrained to abandon his object. Nor were the Catalonians, meantime, less determined in resisting the enemy. Whole districts flew to arms—repulsed General Swartz, at the pass of Bruck, and descending from the heights, drove before them the division of Chabran, which they pursued till it sought refuge in Barcelona. The city of Girona repelled the assault of General Duhesme ; and, inspired by examples like these, other cities rose, and defended themselves with heroic ardour. The insurrection thus became general.

On the side of the Portuguese, the people of Oporto were the first to rouse their countrymen to arms. The flame soon spread along the Douro and extended into the hills of Beira. Though Junot still held the city of Lisbon in awe, in the north the division of Loison was repeatedly attacked ; and in the south, the towns of Villa Vicosa and Beja attempted to throw off the French yoke. The people of Thomar and Alcobaça followed the example ; and the peasantry, as in Spain, began to harass the march of the enemy, hanging on their rear, and taking advantage of every opportunity to annoy them. At Guarda and Atalaya they fought with obstinacy, and even ventured on a general engagement at Evora, in which they were, however,

routed. At Coimbra a junta was formed with the Bishop of Oporto at its head, and a deputation was sent to England, soliciting aid to equip 40,000 infantry and 8000 cavalry. The British ministry complied; and, instead of employing their means in the outfit of our own troops, sums of money were lavished; and stores, destined to fall into the hands of the French—still masters of the country, were without any moderation granted. Although, both in Spain and Portugal, the materials for national resistance existed, they were wasted in isolated and disconnected efforts—efforts which could never have rescued these countries from the gigantic grasp of Napoleon. There was no combination, no control, no direction; in short, no army and no leader in either country capable of disputing the open field with the troops and generals of France.

These main requisites, whether for national defence or independence, were about to be supplied—not by the energy or foresight of the patriots, of the supreme juntas, or of British ministers, but by the destinies of the war having providentially fallen into the hands of one whose talents and resources, whose indomitable patience and perseverance more than compensated for all the disadvantages under which he laboured.

On the 23d of June, 1808, Sir Arthur Wellesley, having received his appointment to the force intended to sail from Cork, wrote to General Hill, giving directions for the brigading of the troops, and expressing his gratification at the prospect of again serving with him on more active duty than they had yet done.* While making preparations for his departure, he was at the same time engaged in closing his secretaryship in Dublin in such a manner as to enable him to give it up with least inconvenience to his successor. Having given full directions to the different subordinate officers, he addressed a letter to Brigadier-general Lee, governor of the county of Limerick, stating his opinion relating to the government of the district,

* Despatches, &c.

of the provinces, and the duties of deputy-governors ; pointing out the importance of a strict communication with the magistrates and gentlemen of the county, of obtaining a knowledge of characters, and of all the circumstances which might occur. He recommended also to his attention the names of persons in whom he might confide, and whom he might with most advantage consult ; thus evincing his anxiety to discharge the civil duties of his station to the last moment. So ably, indeed, had he made his arrangements that he arrived at Cork on the 7th of July, from which place he wrote to the secretary of state, stating that upon a review of his instructions, and a consideration of the state of affairs in Spain, he considered he should best serve the cause by going himself to Corunna, and joining the fleet off Cape Finisterre on the Tagus. He proposed to embark in one of the smaller vessels, to be at the rendezvous before the troops, and to join the fleet again when it came off the Cape.

While waiting for a fair wind, strange to say, General Wellesley received official intimation, that his Majesty had been pleased to intrust the chief command of the troops serving on the coasts of Spain and Portugal to Lieutenant-general Sir Hew Dalrymple, with Lieutenant-general Sir Harry Burrard, second in command ; that the former had been furnished with copies of the instructions drawn out by Sir Arthur Wellesley up to the 15th of July ; instructions, which it was strongly urged he should proceed to carry into execution with every expedition that circumstances would permit, without waiting the arrival of the general-in-chief, but reporting to him his proceedings.

At length, on the 12th of July, the expedition, consisting of 10,000 men, set sail from Cork, and having quitted the fleet as soon as it was off the coast, Sir Arthur Wellesley reached Corunna on the 20th of the same month. It was at the period of the disastrous battle of Rio Seco ; the Spaniards, routed at all points, were in full retreat—General Cuesta seeking refuge in Salamanca, and Blake in the mountains of Asturias. Immediately on his arrival, General Wellesley opened

communications with the junta of Galicia, gave his views of the conduct of the war, and the very next day entered into comprehensive and elaborate statements with the British ministry, besides showing the actual position, the real circumstances and prospects of the patriots. At once, with statesmanlike and military skill, he saw, through the mists of party and intestine divisions, the true character of the war. Drawing correct conclusions from all he heard, he became sanguine of ultimate success, and commenced the discharge of his new duties with his usual cheerfulness and alacrity.

"It is impossible," he observes,* "to convey to you an idea of the sentiment which prevails here in favour of the Spanish cause. The difference between any two men is whether the one is a better or a worse Spaniard; and the better Spaniard is the one who detests the French most heartily. I understand that there is actually no French party in the country; and, at all events, I am convinced that no man now dares to show that he is a friend to the French."

"The final success must depend upon the means of attack and defence of the different parties, of the amount of which it is impossible for me at present to form an opinion. If it be true, that the several French corps which I have above enumerated have been cut off, it is obvious that Bonaparte cannot carry on his operations in Spain, excepting by the means of large armies; and I doubt much whether the country will afford subsistence for a large army, or whether he will be able to supply his magazines from France, the roads being so bad, and the communications so difficult.

"If this be true, his object must be to gain possession of the northern provinces, and this can be done only by the invasion and possession of the Asturias. I think, therefore, that our government ought to direct its attention particularly to that important point, and to endeavour to prevail upon the Asturians to receive a body of our troops."

* Despatch to the Secretary of State. Corunna, 21st of July, 1808.

The following passage* also shows, in a remarkable degree, that power which afterwards so peculiarly distinguished him as a commander-in-chief, of penetrating the designs of the enemy : “ I consider this point so important, that I should not be surprised if Bonaparte, finding that he cannot penetrate by land, should make an effort to reach the Asturias by sea ; and I should therefore recommend to you to reinforce the squadron which is here, and let it cruise between Cape Ortegal and Santander. It might come here, in case of a gale from the northward.

“ I suggested to the junta to fit out ships at Ferrol for this service ; but they said it would divert their attention and their means from other more important objects ; and that, although they were aware of its importance, they would prefer relying for the naval defence on the assistance to be received from Great Britain.”

With reference to his having offered, in pursuance of his instructions, the aid of the force under his command to the junta, he further observes : “ It will be necessary that you should assist all the Spanish provinces with money, arms, and ammunition. Notwithstanding the recent defeat of the Galician army, the junta have not expressed any anxiety to receive the assistance of British troops ; and they again repeated this morning that they could put any number of men into the field, if they were provided with money and arms ; and I think that this disinclination to receive the assistance of British troops is founded in a great degree on the objection to give the command of their troops to British officers.”†

Being induced for these reasons to turn his attention to Portugal, where the French were still in force, with a view of relieving Galicia ; and being at the same time strongly urged by the junta, General Wellesley resolved to gain every information in his power before he decided on what point he would first make a descent—whether at Vigo, Oporto, or nearer to Lisbon.

* Despatch to the Secretary of State. Corunna, 1808.

† Ibid.

With equal caution, and ardour for the field, he justly observed, “ It is impossible for me to decide upon this or any other measure till I shall know more of the situation of affairs. I should have no doubt of success, even without General Spencer’s assistance or that of the allies, if I were once ashore; but to effect a landing in front of an enemy is always difficult, and I shall be inclined to land at a distance from Lisbon.”*

Having at length decided on the course he should pursue, General Wellesley on the night of the 21st sailed from Corunna, joined the fleet the next day, and arrived in the Crocodile off Oporto on the 24th day of July. He found all the provinces to the north of the Tagus, excepting part of the country immediately round Lisbon, in a state of insurrection against the French; while the regular force with the Bishop of Oporto and the junta was only 5000 men, including about 300 cavalry, there were 12,000 peasantry ready to take the field. But, as was the case in Spain, there was abundance of materials for armies wholly unprovided with the means of discipline and equipment. Even the regular troops were considered by Sir Arthur Wellesley altogether inefficient, as a force, to wield against the French; the Spanish corps that was to have joined it was stopped on the frontier; but, under all these untoward circumstances, he determined to bring forward the Portuguese corps at Coimbra, and to collect every other force he could to centre upon Oporto. While here, he had early an opportunity of ascertaining the strange and contradictory nature of Spanish intelligence, and how little he could rely on what was deemed the most official information. He first received alarming accounts of the success of the enemy in the province of Valladolid; then a report of there having been a second action; next was shown a letter from the Bishop of Santiago, stating that General Cuesta had informed him that he had gained a victory in this action, and had actually 1500 of the French cavalry, prisoners in his camp. Yet in the face of these cheering tidings, intelligence was brought of the same

* Despatch to the Secretary of State. Corunna, 1808.

date that the enemy had already occupied Benavente, and the only inference to be drawn from these conflicting statements was that expressed by Sir Arthur himself, "that it was impossible to learn the truth." Having received a letter, however, on the 9th, from Sir C. Cotton, who had occupied a post with 400 marines at Figueira, on the Mondego, in front of Coimbra, Sir Arthur proceeded down the Tagus to confer with him as to the best point for striking a blow—whether to land at some distance, or to make a direct attack upon Lisbon?

Before coming to a final decision he wisely resolved to concentrate as large a force as possible, and wrote to Major-general Spencer, apprizing him of his reasons for desiring that he should join him off the Tagus,* with the least possible delay. "I think," he adds, "there is reason to believe that Bonaparte is not now very strong in Spain; and that he has not at his command the means of reinforcing his troops sufficiently to strike any blow which can have a permanent effect. It is obvious that Dupont, to the southward, does not think himself sufficiently strong for Castanos; otherwise he would not halt and take up a defensive position. Even supposing that we should deem it expedient eventually to return and carry on operations in the south of Spain, it is not probable, from the general state of the French, that any great misfortune can happen before we return."

"In the mean time the Spaniards will acquire strength and experience; and I must observe that nothing we can do can be so useful to them as to get possession of and organize a good army in Portugal.

"On the other hand, if the efforts of the Spanish nation should fail, and if the French are now able to obtain possession of Cadiz, I do not think the presence of your corps would be of much avail to prevent the occurrence of this misfortune; while its presence here is of the utmost importance, to enable me to perform the operations intrusted to me, the success of which

* His Majesty's ship Crocodile, off the Tagus, 26th July, 1808.

would be a great benefit to Great Britain—even if all should unfortunately fail."

At the end of July Sir Arthur Wellesley embarked in his Majesty's ship Donegal, and arrived off Figueira, where he received the gratifying intelligence that a reinforcement, to the amount of 5000 men, was likely to arrive immediately. He here also first heard of the surrender of Dupont and his large force, without daring to fight his way through an army of Spaniards; and instantly prepared to examine Peniche and the Mondego bay with a view to march upon Lisbon, and, should there appear any prospect of success, to attack the French in that city. When off the Mondego river, on the 1st of August, he wrote to his Majesty's Secretary of State, giving an exact account of his proceedings, and stating that, in consequence of General Spencer's representations of the extreme distress for money felt by the junta of Seville, he had authorized him to draw upon England for 100,000*l.*, and to pay that sum to the person who should be appointed to receive it.

Sir Arthur, having now maturely weighed the different plans of attack, decided in favour of a landing to the northward, in which he could be supported by a co-operation of the Portuguese troops, together with the new reinforcements. On the 1st of August he commenced the disembarkation in the river of Mondego; an operation attended with some difficulty, and which would have been quite impracticable without the cordial assistance of the people. He issued 5000 stand of arms to the Portuguese troops intended to support the attack, and calmly awaited the arrival of General Spencer and the other forces. Upon the same day he wrote to the government, expressing sentiments which reflected the highest honour both on his judgment and his correct feeling.*

"Pole and Burghersh have apprized me of the arrangements for the future command of this army; and the former has informed me of your kindness towards me, of which I have

* To Viscount Castlereagh, Secretary of State. H.M.S. Donegal, 1st of August, 1808.

experienced so many instances that I can never doubt it in any case. All that I can say upon that subject is, that whether I am to command the army or not, or am to quit it, I shall do my best to ensure its success; and you may depend upon it that I shall not hurry the operations or commence them one moment sooner than they ought to be commenced, in order that I may acquire the credit of the success.

“The government will determine for me in what way they will employ me hereafter, whether here or elsewhere. My opinion is, that Great Britain ought to raise, organize, and pay an army in Portugal, consisting of 30,000 Portuguese troops, and 20,000 British, including 4000 or 5000 cavalry. This army might operate on the frontiers of Portugal in Spanish Extremadura, and it would serve as the link between the kingdoms of Galicia and Andalusia; it would give Great Britain the preponderance in the conduct of the war in the Peninsula; and whatever might be the result of the Spanish exertions, Portugal would be saved from the French grasp. You know best whether you could bear the expense, or what part of it the Portuguese government would or could defray; but, if you should adopt this plan, you must send every thing from England—arms, ammunition, clothing, and accoutrements, ordnance, flour, oats, &c. These articles must find their way to the frontier partly by the navigation of the Douro and Tagus, and partly by other means.”

After the landing had been effected, the most minute directions were given by General Wellesley for the exact conduct of the commissariat, in which throughout all his campaigns he had shown the same wise and provident care. On the 2d, the proclamation to the people of Portugal, dated from Lavaos, and signed by *Arthur Wellesley* and Charles Cotton, was hailed by the Portuguese with demonstrations of joy, and from all sides the people flocked in crowds invoking blessings on England—the deliverer of the oppressed. By the 5th the whole of the troops had disembarked, and almost at the same moment General Spencer arrived. The allied force did not exceed 12,300

men ; yet General Freire, who had the command of the Portuguese, was anxious that Sir Arthur should abandon the coast, march into the heart of Beira, and commence a general campaign. The wisdom of the English general was proof against such a temptation to commence the war upon a grand scale. He saw at once that such a measure must be attended with peril, if not destruction, to his little force. His objections to it were thus forcibly put in a letter to Colonel Trant :* “ There is nothing so foolish as to push these half-disciplined troops forward ; for the certain consequence must be either their early and precipitate retreat, if the enemy should advance, or their certain destruction. I am determined not to move a man of my army till I am fully prepared to support any detachment I may send forward ; and for this reason, I object to send any troops to Leyria, in answer to various applications which have been made to me by a Portuguese commissary, who has applied for protection, being, as he says, employed to collect supplies for the British troops, and which will probably fall into the hands of the enemy if he should not be supported. It is unfortunate, therefore, that this gentleman has been sent forward, particularly if the consequence should be the loss of the supplies which Leyria might otherwise have afforded.”

Having received instructions that Sir Harry Burrard was likely to arrive on the coast of Portugal with a force of 10,000 men, recently employed in the north of Europe, under Sir John Moore, General Wellesley wrote to his superior officer, giving him very full and particular information respecting the state of the war. Of its progress in Spain, however, he spoke with less certainty, and pointedly remarked,† “ When you shall have been a short time in this country, and shall have observed the degree to which the deficiency of real information is supplied by the circulation of unfounded reports, you will not be surprised at my want of accurate knowledge upon these subjects.” He described the enemy’s force in Portugal as consisting of

* Lavaos, 4th August, 1808.

† Lavaos, 8th August, 1808.

from 16,000 to 18,000 men. Of these there were about 500 in the fort of Almeida; about the same number in Elvas; 600 or 800 at Peniche, and 1600 or 1800 in the province of Alentejo, at Setuval, &c.; while the remainder were disposable for the defence of Lisbon in the forts of St. Julian and Cascaes, in the batteries along the coast as far as the rock of Lisbon, to which the enemy had lately added some works.

On the 8th General Wellesley, having prepared to advance, wrote from Lavaos to Sir Hew Dalrymple, commander-in-chief, enclosing the important document already addressed to Sir Harry Burrard; and the same day gave orders to Major-general Fane to advance on the following evening, and take up a position in front of St. Gião. Directing Major-general Hill to support this movement, on the 10th General Wellesley himself marched; was joined by 5000 Portuguese, and, on the same day, his advanced guard entered Leyria, where the Portuguese, under Freire, actually seized on the magazine collected for the British, and by their want of discipline realized the previous opinion of the English general. By this movement he had already cut the line of communication between the divisions of General Loison approaching from Abrantes, and La Borde hastening from Lisbon. On the 10th Sir Arthur encamped at Lugar, eight miles to the north of Leyria; the next day he reached Leyria. Hence he despatched full accounts of the progress of his first campaign in the Peninsula to the British government, and to Sir Harry Burrard, giving the latter the most exact information on the state and resources of the country, and the plans it might be the most proper to adopt with regard to his commissariat and future operations on the arrival of new forces.

From Calvario, on the 13th of August, Sir Arthur next addressed a letter to Colonel Trant, strongly condemning the course pursued by General Freire. "As to his plan of operations I do not see what purpose it is to answer in view to the result of the campaign; and I certainly can never give my sanction to any thing which appears so useless and so crudely digested, so far as even to promise to communicate with, or

aid the person who is carrying it into execution I shall execute the orders which I have received from my government without the assistance of the Portuguese government; and General Freire will have to justify himself with the existing government of Portugal, with his prince, and with the world, for having omitted to stand forward on this interesting occasion, and for having refused to send me the assistance which it is in his power to give." By these well-directed strictures, and by subsequent reasoning, as well as by adopting a conciliatory tone, he at length prevailed on the infatuated and misguided Freire to abandon his mad scheme and follow the British line of march. In fact, as hostilities drew nigh, the Portuguese dreaded to risk a general action, being well aware of the consequences of a defeat. The French, too, were held to be invincible; the English yet untried; and the junta of Oporto and Freire played into each other's hands. In case the British should be routed, this politic commander considered that if he took no part, he should not stand committed, and might make terms with the French; and if they triumphed, he could, separated from them, best promote the ambitious projects of the junta.

Sir Arthur was at Alcobaça on the 14th, the enemy having retreated from their position in the night, of which he immediately conveyed intelligence to the Portuguese general, who now placed 1400 infantry and 250 cavalry under his great colleague's command. It was feared that Junot had quitted Lisbon with his reserve on the 15th, and that on the 17th he had joined Loison at Alcoentre. About 4000 of the enemy occupied Roliça, with their advanced posts extending to the village of Obidos, within three miles of Caldas, which latter place General Wellesley reached on the 16th. As the possession of Obidos was important to his future operations, he resolved to occupy it, and the moment that the British infantry arrived upon the ground, detached, for this purpose, four companies of riflemen belonging to the 60th and 95th regiments.

The French were driven out and pursued a distance of three miles, when the riflemen were attacked, and nearly cut off by

a superior force, while large bodies of the enemy appeared on both flanks of the main body of the detachment which advanced to their support. The British remained in possession of the village, and the enemy retired from the neighbourhood. The next morning Sir Arthur reconnoitred the strong position of La Borde, who had retreated in front of the army by the sea road towards Lisbon; while another body of 5000, under Loison, retired by the great road, with a view of joining, nearer Lisbon, whatever troops could be spared from the defence of the fortifications.

Although he had encountered the greatest difficulties and continual annoyance from the conduct of the Portuguese general, Sir Arthur wrote from Caldas in his usual cheering and confiding tone, "We are going on as well as possible; the army in high order, and in great spirits. We make long marches, to which they are becoming accustomed; and I make no doubt they will be equal to any thing when we shall reach Lisbon. The affair of the advanced posts of yesterday evening was unpleasant, because it was quite useless; and was occasioned contrary to orders, solely by the imprudence of the officer, and the dash and eagerness of the men; they behaved remarkably well, and did some execution with their rifles.

"I send you the history of our separation from the Portuguese army, that you may communicate upon it with De Sousa. If you should determine to form a Portuguese army, you must, if possible, have nothing to do with General Freire. The fact is, they are afraid of the French; they are incapable of making any arrangement to feed their troops; and they are not a little afraid of them."*

La Borde having continued in his position, General Wellesley proceeded to Villa Verde; and resolved to attack him on the morning of the 17th. The enemy had chosen his position well. The beautiful village of Roliça, surrounded by vines and olive-gardens, stands on an eminence with a plain in its front,

* Despatches to Viscount Castlereagh, Secretary of State. Caldas, August 16th.

and at the end of a valley, which, commencing at Caldas, is terminated to the southward by mountains which join the hills forming the valley on the left. Looking from Caldas, in the centre of the valley and about eight miles from Roliça, is the town and old Moorish fort of Obidos, from whence the enemy's pickets had been driven on the 15th; and from that time he had posts in the hills on both sides of the valley, as well as in the plains in front of his army, which was posted on the heights in front of Roliça, its right resting upon the hills, its left upon an eminence on which was a windmill, and the whole covering four or five passes into the mountains on his rear. His force consisted of about 6000 men, of which 500 were cavalry, with five pieces of cannon. And there was some reason to believe that General Loison, who was at Rio Mayor the day before, would join La Borde by his right in the course of the night.

The plan of attack was formed accordingly, and having disposed his army in three columns, General Wellesley advanced from Obidos early in the morning. The right consisted of 1200 Portuguese infantry, the Portuguese cavalry was directed to turn the enemy's left, and penetrate as far as the mountains in his rear. The left, consisting of General Ferguson's brigade of infantry, three companies of riflemen, a brigade of light artillery, and twenty British and twenty Portuguese cavalry, was to ascend the hills at Obidos, to turn the enemy's posts on the left of the valley, as well as the right of his post at Roliça. This corps was also destined to watch the motions of Loison on the enemy's right; the centre, consisting of four brigades under Generals Hill, Nightingale, Crawford, and Fane (with the exception of the riflemen detached with Major-general Ferguson), and 400 Portuguese light infantry, a brigade of nine-pounders, and a brigade of six-pounders, were directed to attack General La Borde's position in front.

Such was the disposition of the first little army with which our great commander moved boldly forward to attack some of the most experienced generals and the best troops trained under the eye of Napoleon himself. At the appointed moment 9000 men

advanced steadily up the valley upon the strong positions of the enemy. The riflemen were immediately detached into the hills on the left to maintain the communication between the centre and left, and to protect the march of the former along the valley. All the enemy's posts were successively driven in; General Hill's brigade moved forward in three columns of battalions on the right of the valley, supported by the cavalry, in order to attack the enemy's left. Generals Nightingale and Crawfurd, meantime, moved with the artillery along the high-road till they formed in the plain directly in the enemy's front, supported by the light infantry companies and the 45th regiment; while two other regiments of General Crawfurd's brigade, and half of the nine-pounder brigade were kept as a reserve in the rear. Sir Arthur himself rode with the main body of his little army in a position to direct every movement, and at every point. At the same time that General Hill advanced to carry the formidable position of the enemy, the riflemen were in the hills on his right, the Portuguese in a village on the left, and General Ferguson's column was descending from the heights into the plain.

Here the first position of La Borde, near Rolica, was carried, though he retired with the utmost regularity and celerity by the passes into the mountains. Notwithstanding the rapid advance of the British, the want of cavalry caused the enemy but little loss on the plain. He retreated only to a still more formidable position, and it was necessary to make a fresh disposition to follow up the attack. In so far, the skilful movements of Sir Arthur, which, at the same moment, threatened both flanks of the enemy, had proved perfectly successful; the next object was to attack the different passes, and the ridge of Zambugeira, a position of vast strength on the second line of his defence. No time was lost; the Portuguese infantry were ordered to move up a pass on the right of the whole. The light companies of General Hill's brigade, and the 5th regiment, advanced up a pass next on the right; and the 29th, supported by the 9th, under General Nightingale, attacked a third; the 48th and 82d regiments taking the passes on the left. As they advanced, the sharp fire

of the skirmishers was heard among the rocky hollows mingled with the shouts of the combatants ; and soon the increasing roar of the battle—the dense white clouds following the roll of the artillery—showed the fierceness of the conflict—concealing it from the view of the shepherds and countrymen who were seen gazing from the points of the loftiest sierras. Most of the passes were disputed with resolution by the enemy : the 9th and 29th regiments particularly distinguished themselves, charging with such impetuosity as to reach the enemy before the expected attack upon his flanks. La Borde had retired a little on his left as the English pressed on, but maintained his right with the utmost obstinacy, trusting every moment to receive the support of Loison. The whole defence, indeed, of the enemy was desperate ; no sooner had the 29th carried the pass before them, and issued from the ravine than a French battalion fell upon them from behind a screen of trees, poured in its fire, and made a deadly charge with the bayonet. It was here the brave Colonel Lake fell at the head of his men, and about sixty of them were made prisoners. Still, in spite of all disadvantages, this undaunted regiment rallied, and seconded by the 29th, recovered their wounded and their dead, sustaining the fiercest assaults with unyielding resolution. The enemy was now driven from all the positions he had taken in the passes of the mountains, and British troops only were to be seen in the plains on their tops.

La Borde made three desperate attacks to retrieve the day, and to cover the retreat of his defeated army ; but though repulsed in all, this skilful general succeeded in effecting his retreat in good order, protected by his cavalry — an arm in which General Wellesley was unfortunately so deficient. Another circumstance in favour of the enemy was the difficulty of bringing up the passes of the mountains a sufficient number of troops and of cannon to support those which had first ascended. The loss of the enemy, however, was very considerable, though not in prisoners, and he left three pieces of cannon in the hands of the victorious British.

The conduct of the troops in this first decided action was admirable, and won the strongest eulogies both from the lips and

the pen of their distinguished commander. Every soldier, and every British officer, vied with each other in their eagerness to discharge their duties in such a way as to ensure the success of this eventful battle; and, under the greatest disadvantages, they snatched the laurels from the conquerors of Europe. It was in vain the latter attempted to rally near the village of Zambugeira; they were compelled to yield up the road to Torres Vedras, and to retire by the narrow pass of Runa, making a forced march to gain the position of Montechique. They lost 600 in killed and wounded, the commander, La Borde himself, being among the latter. On the part of the English, two lieutenant-colonels and 500 killed, wounded, and prisoners, formed the total of the loss.

From the nature of the ground, it was found impracticable to bring the superior force of the British to bear upon their antagonists; the brunt of the action fell upon the few regiments that first carried the formidable positions, and scarcely 4000 were actually engaged. It has also been justly remarked, that in order to appreciate the importance and the consequences of this victory, we should recollect that had not the enemy's position been forced at the critical moment it was, he would, according to the best accounts, have been strengthened that evening by the division of Loison, which was within one day's march of him; and it was known that Junot had left Lisbon with the same intention, at the head of the whole of his remaining force. Even as matters stood, it required all the abilities displayed by the English general, and all the prowess of the British soldier to dislodge him from a succession of positions occupied with so much judgment and so gallantly defended. What, then, might have been the result, had such positions been defended by double or treble the force, as they would have been within a few hours, it is not difficult to conjecture, and in so far to form a tolerably correct opinion of the sagacity and judgment which directed the English general in his rapid advance and attack. He saw how much the fate of the war, as applied to Portugal, depended upon the result of his movements; and it appeared as if the opinion of both the skilful opponents on this occasion were participated in by the respective

forces, every individual engaged contending for victory, as if fully aware of the absolute necessity on one side of retaining, on the other of forcing these formidable passes.

Upon the evening of the engagement, which terminated about four in the afternoon, General Wellesley took up his position somewhat in advance of the well-contested field; and at the same time came intelligence of General Anstruther having arrived off the coast with a large reinforcement. The French now made a general movement; Loison joined La Borde at Torres Vedras, and both commenced their march towards Lisbon. Junot, also, having reached Torres Vedras, there was every appearance of a combined movement, with a view, perhaps, to retrieving their lost ground, or striking some sudden blow against the British. Sir Arthur, therefore, marched next day to Lourinha, on the road to which his right already rested; and, on the 19th, he proceeded to Vimiero, with the double purpose of strengthening his own army and favouring the progress of General Anstruther. By these cautious movements the junction was early and safely effected, notwithstanding that large bodies of French cavalry hung upon the British rear and threatened repeated attacks. Each of the armies having now formed, its respective junction appeared to rest on their arms, as if to await the attack of the enemy. But the series of important events that followed will best be treated in the opening of the ensuing chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

(1808 to 1814.)

Observations on the battle of Roliça—Skilful combinations—Rapid pursuit—Preparations to engage Junot—Compelled to abandon the design—Attacked by the French—Battle of Vimiero—Compelled to forego the advantages—Arrival of Sir Hew Dalrymple—Armistice—Convention of Cintra—Discontent of the Portuguese—And of England—Anecdotes—Signal exploits—Tribute to British valour—Court of Inquiry—Vindication of Sir Arthur Wellesley—His noble and disinterested conduct—Resumes office—Efforts of Napoleon—Fate of the Spanish armies—Weakness of the ministry—Campaign of Sir John Moore—Causes of its failure—Opinion of Napoleon—Memorable retreat—Victory of Corunna—Death and character of Sir John Moore.

WITH the victory of Roliça the great Peninsular war, so important in all its results, may be said to have auspiciously commenced. Here, for the first time, the veteran legions of Napoleon, led by commanders of consummate ability and skill, were attacked and routed in the open field, notwithstanding every advantage of established reputation, experience, and the almost impregnable positions which they occupied. Up to this period the imperial eagles had held on their glorious flight unchecked, or with scarcely greater opposition than is met with by the monarch of the air when he pounces upon his helpless victims. But a foe had now appeared on the scene of his brilliant conquests, to dispute with the master of continental Europe, on his own ground, the supremacy of his military dominion ; and, like the Roman Camillus, in the last hour of need to cast England's sword into the scale, and rescue the bartered nations from the grasp of the invader. No brighter promise ; no stronger earnest could have been given of the future services and splendid achievements of one comprehensive and indefatigable mind than the battle of Roliça ; the very

difficulties under which it was won produced a moral influence no less important than the manifestation of physical power. The rapid march, the mode of attack, the fine combination of movements and manœuvres during the heat of the action, all directed to one result, displayed the genius of a commander confident in his own resources ; while his personal exertions, activity, and fearless courage equally excited the respect and admiration of his army. At every critical moment, and in the severest struggle, he was always to be seen ; and it was observed by those around him that the day was carried no less by his personal gallantry than by his skill. That this must have been the fact, would appear both from the nature of the engagement, and the expressions used by the General himself in an affecting letter to a relative of the lamented Colonel Lake, “ that he fell in the achievement of one of the most heroic actions that had been performed by the British army.”

In his despatch also from Lourinha to the British government, he expressly mentions that had it not been for the difficulties of the ground, which prevented him from bringing up a sufficient number of troops and cannon, he should have been enabled to capture the whole army of the enemy. We are not surprised, therefore, to find in his despatches at this period, a tone of increasing confidence, and an earnest desire to follow up his successes with the least possible delay. He was now at the head of a force of from 16,000 to 18,000 men, with eighteen pieces of artillery ; and though the landing of the reinforcements in the bay of Maceira caused some delay, several of the boats having unfortunately been swamped, he resolved to press on for Mafra, and attack Marshal Junot ere he had time to adopt measures of defence or to consolidate his forces. His first object was, by a forced march on the 21st, to turn the enemy’s position at Torres Vedras, and advancing upon Mafra, seize the neighbouring heights, and thus intercept the French line of march. He was already within nine miles of the enemy, and there was a clear road which led from the sea-coast to the positions he wished to attack. (18th of August, 1808.) That this plan of following up his victory at Rolica was

founded on the soundest military rules, and perfect knowledge of his own and of his adversary's object, subsequent events sufficiently proved ; he would have made his attack under every advantage, instead of waiting to be attacked by a superior force in his position at Vimiero.

As it was, the arrival of Sir Harry Burrard to take the chief command in the absence of Sir Hew Dalrymple, led to a change of plans not sanctioned by the judgment of the victor of Roliça. The former considered it requisite, before assuming the offensive, to call in the aid of an additional force under Sir John Moore ; although Sir Arthur Wellesley, with his accustomed foresight, had carefully acquainted his superior officer with the grounds upon which he was about to proceed, and shown that he was fully equal to adopt the offensive without calling away so large a force from other points. " You will readily believe," he writes in his despatch to government,* " that this determination is not in conformity with my opinion, and I only wish that Sir Harry had landed and seen things with his own eyes before he had made it." And that evening Sir Arthur was observed, for the first time since he had landed, to return to his camp in evident chagrin and disappointment.

How little did he suppose, on retiring to his tent, that fortune was preparing for her favourite soldier the only revenge of which he was ever ambitious, of proving by his actions the correctness of his judgment, and of the plans and determinations which he had previously formed. About midnight, on that very day, he had the joy of receiving the report of the approach of Junot, who was already within little less than a league of the British camp. Yet so excellent were the arrangements already made, that the English general was compelled in no way to alter his line ; patroles were sent out, pickets and sentries were on the alert, and the calm manner, and undisturbed demeanour, so remarkable a trait on all occasions of the sort, even when suddenly aroused from his sleep, gave no indications of the pleasure which animated the heart of the soldier. Scarcely once during this eventful war was he com-

* Dated Vimiero, August 21, 1808.

elled to put his troops under arms by night; nor would he, if possible, deprive them of a single hour's rest. One hour before dawn, when on active service, they were accustomed to appear equipped for the field; and it was thus they stood prepared on the morning of the 21st of August, before a single enemy was to be seen.

Vimiero is a village pleasantly situated in a gentle and quiet valley, through which flows the small river of Maceira. Beyond, and to the westward and northward of this village, rises a mountain of which the western point reaches to the sea; the eastern is separated by a deep ravine from the height over which passes the road which leads from Lourinha and the northward to Vimiero. On this mountain was posted the chief part of the infantry with eight pieces of artillery; General Hill's brigade was on the right, and Ferguson's on the left, having one battalion on the heights separated from the mountain. Towards the east and south of the town lay a mill wholly commanded, and most of all on its right, by the mountain to the west side, and commanding also the surrounding ground to the south and east, on which General Fane was posted with his riflemen, and the 50th regiment; and General Anstruther's brigade, with the artillery which had been ordered to that position during the night. The ground over which the road passes from Lourinha commanded the left of this height; and it had not been occupied except by a picket, as the camp had been taken up only for one night, and there was no water in the neighbourhood.

The cavalry and reserve of artillery were in the valley between the hill on which the infantry stood, both flanking and supporting the advance of the riflemen.

About eight o'clock a picket of the enemy's horse was first seen on the heights, towards Lourinha; and after pushing forward his scouts, soon appeared in full force with the evident object of attacking the advanced guard and the left of the British. Immediately four brigades from the mountain on the east moved across the ravine to the heights on the road to Lourinha with three pieces of cannon. They were there formed with their right resting upon

the valley which leads into Vimiero, and their left upon the other ravine which separates these heights from the range which terminates at the landing-place at Maceira. On the last-mentioned heights were posted the Portuguese troops, and they were supported by General Crawfurd's brigade.

The advanced guard on the heights to the south and east side being sufficiently strong, General Hill moved to the centre of the mountain where stood the great body of the infantry, as a support to these troops and as a reserve to the whole army; in addition to the support of the cavalry in the rear of their right.

The enemy opened his attack in strong columns against the entire body of troops on this height; on the left they advanced through the fire of the riflemen close up to the 50th regiment, until they were checked and driven back by that corps at the point of the bayonet. The French infantry in three divisions were commanded by La Borde, Loison, and Kellerman; the horse by General Margaron; and the simultaneous attack of all was like that of men determined to conquer or to perish. Besides the conflict on the heights, it raged with equal fury in every part of the field; the possession of the road leading into Vimiero was disputed with persevering resolution, and especially where a strong body had been posted in the churchyard to prevent the enemy forcing an entrance into the town.

Up to this period of the battle, the British had received, and, after a severe struggle, repulsed, the attacks of the enemy, acting, however, altogether on the defensive. But now they were attacked in flank by General Ackland's brigade, as it advanced to its position on the heights to the left, while a brisk cannonade was kept up on the flank of the enemy's columns by the artillery on those heights. The brunt of the attack was continued on the brigade of General Fane, but was bravely repulsed at all points. Once, as the French retired in confusion, a regiment of light dragoons, the 20th, pursued them with so little precaution that they were suddenly set upon by the heavy cavalry of Margaron, and cut to pieces with their gallant colonel, who fell at their head. No less desperate was the encounter between Kellerman's column

of reserve and the gallant 43d in their conflict for the vineyards adjoining the church : the advanced companies were at first driven back with great slaughter ; but again rallying upon the next ranks they threw themselves upon the head of the French column in a ravine, and, charging with the bayonet, put them to the rout. At length the vigour of the enemy's attacks ceased ; they were pressed on all sides by the British ; lost thirteen cannon and a great number of prisoners ; but were still enabled to retire without confusion, owing to the powerful protection received from their numerous cavalry, which in part snatched the fruits of victory as before from the victorious general, who with a few regiments of heavy horse would have completed the enemy's destruction.

In this action, in which the whole of the French force in Portugal was employed, under the command of Marshal Junot, Duke of Abrantes, in person ; in which the enemy was so very superior in cavalry and in artillery, not more than half the British army was actually engaged ; yet the enemy sustained a signal defeat, and would have suffered much more had not the same opinion, which before prevented the execution of Sir Arthur's plans, controlled his movements after a second victory. In a letter addressed to the Duke of York,* General Wellesley alludes to this subject, and to the probable results of the battle, if he had been allowed to seize the advantages that presented themselves. "I thought it probable," he observes, "that if I did not attack the enemy he would attack me, and I prepared for the conflict at daylight in the morning.

"I cannot say too much in favour of the troops ; their gallantry and their discipline were equally conspicuous ; and I must add that this is the only action that I have ever been in, in which every thing passed as it had been directed, and no mistake was made by any of the officers charged with its conduct. I think if General Hill's brigade and the advanced guard had moved upon Torres Vedras, as soon as it was certain that the enemy's right had been defeated by our left, and our left had pursued their ad-

* Vimiero, August 22, 1808.

vantage, the enemy would have been cut off from Torres Vedras, and we should have been at Lisbon before him; if, indeed, any French army had remained in Portugal. But Sir Harry Burrard, who was at this time upon the ground, still thought it advisable not to move from Vimiero; and the enemy made good their retreat to Torres Vedras. Sir Hew Dalrymple arrived this morning, and has taken the command of the army."

In still more emphatic language, he remarks in his despatch to the Secretary of State,* "that Sir Harry did not land till late in the day, in the midst of the attack, and he desired me to continue my own operations. And, as far as I am personally concerned in the action, I was amply rewarded for any disappointment I might have felt in not having had an opportunity of bringing the service to a close, by the satisfaction expressed by the army, that the second and more important victory had been gained by their old general. I have also the pleasure to add, that it has had more effect than all the arguments I could use to induce the general to move on, and I believe he will march to-morrow. Indeed, if he does not, we shall be poisoned here by the stench of the dead and wounded; or we shall starve, every thing in the neighbourhood being eaten up. From the number of dead Frenchmen about the ground, and the number of prisoners and wounded, I should think their loss could not be far short of 3000 men. The force which attacked us was very respectable, and probably not short of 14,000 men, including 1300 dragoons and artillery, and 300 chasseurs à cheval."

At no period were the valour and discipline of British troops more conspicuously displayed, and their commander, always just as he was grateful, bestowed on them that proud eulogy which their high bearing and invincible bravery so well deserved. To them and their favourite general, it was felt that the credit of that day was wholly due. It is evident from all the events of this brief but eventful campaign, and from the opinion formed of it by its great leader, that had he been permitted to follow up

* Vimiero, August 22.

his victories as he had won them, there would have been no French army in Portugal, no Convention of Cintra, and no subsequent necessity for the recall of a general, whose absence may justly be said to have produced that train of ill-arranged measures and misfortunes, which had nearly caused the destruction of the British army, and terminated in the death of a man of kindred worth and genius with the illustrious subject of these memoirs—the high-minded and lamented Moore.

However much these circumstances were to be deplored, no less than the consequences of entering into a convention with a beaten enemy, by which he was not only to escape, but to be conveyed in safety to the required destination, not a shadow of blame or reproach rested upon the liberators of Portugal. So long as the English general acted upon his own responsibility, all things were conducted well and prosperously; and it was among the “untoward events” that another general should appear after the heat of the action—to stop the pursuit, and a third at its close, to make a treaty with a worsted enemy which enabled him to reappear with renewed means; in so far, “undoing all, as all had never been.” It was for these reasons, that Sir Arthur Wellesley showed so much natural reluctance to abandon his own plans, and to sign the convention; and he was careful to protest, that although he signed these conditions, he begged it to be understood that he did not entirely approve of the manner in which the instrument was worded.

Had the views of General Wellesley been carried into effect, the French would not have been in a position to require the terms which, from the heights of Torres Vedras, and in possession of the strong fortresses of Almeida and of Elvas, they were emboldened to do. There is, at the same time, no doubt that both Sir Hew Dalrymple and Sir Harry Burrard, men of considerable experience and ability, acted up to the best of their judgment; and in not laying claim to any degree of credit for the success of their great contemporary, they gave the strongest and most gratifying testimony to his superior merit.

On reaching the field of action, Sir Harry Burrard, as he him-

self stated, could not but approve of every disposition that had then been, and was subsequently, made by Sir Arthur Wellesley, his comprehensive mind furnishing a ready resource in every emergency, and rendering it quite unnecessary to direct any alteration.

Among the chief articles of the convention, it was arranged that Portugal should be delivered up to the British troops, and that the French army should evacuate it with arms and baggage, but not as prisoners of war. That the French should be transported to their own country in British vessels, in which the French army should carry all its artillery, tumrels, horses, and sixty rounds of ammunition for each gun, together with all the property of the army, private property, military chest, cavalry, horses, &c.

Although Sir Arthur Wellesley differed with the other commanders on the expediency of some of the conditions, he was induced to agree upon the general principle and policy of the measure. While yet in progress, the new reinforcements under Sir John Moore landed in Maceira Bay,—a force, it might fairly be presumed, that would have enabled the British generals to press their advantages and act on the offensive. But it was a singular coincidence, that within a few hours after the arrival of Sir Hew Dalrymple to take the command, General Kellerman presented himself at the British head-quarters, just as Sir Harry Burrard had appeared in the heat of the conflict; and then Sir John Moore, at the moment when negotiations had already been opened.

It was no less remarkable, that in a convention entered into with reference to the interests of the country in which it took place, there was no representative of those interests on the part of Portugal; and that by the fifth article, the vast amount of *property*, as it was modestly termed, instead of the plunder of an entire country, was secured to the invaders without the consent of the government, or the remonstrances of the injured parties being heard—much less redress given for their wrongs. According to the sixth article, an amnesty, or act of oblivion, for all political offences was granted, by which the conduct of General Freire, and the intrigues of the Bishop and junta of Oporto, and of all

the adherents of the French, escaped inquiry and punishment. At the same time, another convention was entered into with the Russian admiral Seniavin, under the direction of Sir Charles Cotton, the British admiral, according to which the fleet of that nation, consisting of nine line-of-battle ships and one frigate, were surrendered to be held, as a guarantee by England, until six months after the conclusion of peace between Russia and England, and measures were immediately adopted for putting the articles into force.

During these arrangements for the evacuation of the country by the French, considerable excitement was raised in the public mind by the arts of emissaries employed from Oporto, who, in contravention of the terms agreed upon, incited the people of Lisbon to rise upon the French, seize upon the spoils they had made, and the wealth they had amassed, and expel them from the city. The scheme, however, was more flattering than the execution of it was agreeable; the French were yet masters of Lisbon, and, though hated by the populace, were as much feared as they were detested. The authorities, instead of repressing, added to the violent feelings already excited by the tenor of the convention; a suspension of the treaty was loudly demanded, the Monteiro Mor appeared at the head of a large body of peasants on the banks of the Tagus, and issued an inflammatory address, calling on all Portuguese to resist the fulfilment of so prejudicial and disgraceful a treaty.

Fortunately, the British officer appointed to the command of the city, arrived on the 12th of September, in time to prevent any further outbreak of the mutinous spirit spreading so fast on all sides; and, by uniting the utmost degree of firmness with conciliatory measures, Sir John Hope was enabled to superintend the embarkation of the French forces without the slightest outrage or infringement of the conditions. The people also, notwithstanding the indignation they felt, received the English with acclamations; and it is only just to state, that they made honourable distinction between those rapacious commissioners on the side of the French, and the conduct of nobler-minded officers, like

Brenzier, Travot, and Charlot, who, to the last moment, could walk the streets of Lisbon unmolested. The last division of the enemy embarked amidst the execrations of all classes; shouts of exultation and patriotic songs were heard by the French soldiers as they cleared the bay; there was a splendid illumination of the city and harbour; and the only party that appeared not to rejoice in their deliverance from an oppressive foe, and the manner of accomplishing it, was the Bishop of Oporto and the junta. That party incited the Spanish general Galluzzo to withhold his consent to the convention, and he actually proceeded to invest fort La Lippe.

Decisive means, however, were taken to remove these petty obstacles; the forts in possession of the French were delivered up, and not a French soldier remained in Portugal. The dissatisfaction felt in England at this unexpected termination of the campaign, and at some articles in the convention,—a dissatisfaction in which Sir Arthur Wellesley himself participated,—extended to all the parties, and it was soon evident that a public inquiry was indispensable. Sir Arthur had been appointed by the commander-in-chief to open negotiations with General Kellerman, but difficulties sprang up in the outset; it became necessary to have the concurrence of the naval commander on the station, and the seventh article, which stipulated for the neutrality of the port of Lisbon, and for permission that the Russian squadron should be allowed to sail without interruption, was very properly objected to. So great was the difficulty, indeed, of conducting the discussions that ensued, that the quartermaster-general, Colonel Murray, was deputed to enter into the details with General Kellerman, while General Wellesley availed himself of the interval afforded by the suspension of arms to move forward the different columns of the British upon the routes by which they were to proceed; and in the mean time the ratifications of the definitive convention were exchanged,* and the respective parties, after their due execution, prepared to take their departure.

* On the 3d of August, 1808.

While Sir Arthur Wellesley, Sir Hew Dalrymple, and Sir Harry Burrard, were recalled to England; Lord Paget, General Ferguson, and numerous other officers, were permitted to return home on leave of absence.

Before their arrival, however, it became manifest that the indignation and regret, so loudly expressed by the Portuguese, at some of the terms in the unfortunate convention, were not less felt by the British public. Petitions to the throne, and to the House of Commons, were presented from all parts of the kingdom, calling for inquiry into the reasons for entering into a convention under the existing circumstances; after two signal victories, and when the British general in actual command, was prepared to follow up the advantages he had obtained. Considerable prejudice, at the same time, was excited against Sir Arthur Wellesley, as the officer who signed the preliminary articles; for, although he was no longer commander-in-chief, it was maintained by the party opposed to him, that he was bound to object to the terms, if not to the arrangement altogether.

In making these charges, the enemies of this great soldier showed that they were his best advocates; for the measures which he pursued throughout, were exactly such as they declared he ought to have adopted. But popular clamour, ever opposed to sound reason and a sense of justice, was, for the moment predominant; it was not considered that Sir Arthur Wellesley here acted in a subordinate character; that his business, as the constituted agent, was to receive the French proposals, to lay them before his commander, and to obey his orders and sign them as a basis for subsequent discussion,—the preliminaries for a definite arrangement. The idea of a convention was none of his; his favourite object was to complete the work for which he had been sent out—and he was prepared to do it,—to free Lisbon, and liberate Portugal with his little army from the Gallic yoke. As he himself expressly stated, he had signed the preliminary basis at the desire of Sir Hew Dalrymple, though not in consequence of any actual command or compulsion, while he differed from him in some of the details. After signing the preliminaries he

was superseded as the negotiator by Colonel Murray, and confined his attention solely to his own military arrangements. When, before the court, Sir Hew Dalrymple, complained that he had been grossly aspersed in some of the public journals, apparently for the purpose of supporting the reputation of a more favoured officer, but that there, and in the face of the country, he pledged himself that Sir Harry Burrard, Sir Arthur Wellesley, and himself, were present with General Kellerman, when the preliminaries were discussed ; that Sir Arthur bore that part in the discussion, to which the important situation he held in the country, the victory he had lately obtained, and the extensive information, of a local character, which he possessed,—all entitled him to assume.

In touching on this subject in his examination before the court, where his appearance excited an unusual sensation, General Wellesley, with equal modesty and frankness, replied that he regretted exceedingly—no man more—that any thing should have been stated in the public prints, which could be construed to have the effect of serving him at the expense of the conduct or character of Sir Hew Dalrymple. He begged to disclaim—in his own name, and in that of his relatives and friends—any approbation, or even knowledge, of such sentiments.

During the progress of the inquiry, also, on the 22d of November, General Wellesley considered it further expedient for the vindication of his character and conduct in this disagreeable affair, to go more fully into particulars than he had before done, to which he was more especially induced by Sir Hew Dalrymple having furnished to the court a document containing statements which bore more strongly than did his evidence upon the question. Sir Arthur Wellesley, on this being read, proceeded to state distinctly and in an emphatic tone, the following facts :—" That the force he commanded consisted of 13,000 men ; that he was promised the aid of 6000 Portuguese ; that the French army comprised 20,500 men, and was in possession of the fortress of Elvas, inferior in strength to none of the second class in Europe ; yet he was confident that the British force was competent to advance

against the enemy, and bring the struggle to a successful issue ; that the line of march he had proposed, was, in his opinion, every way preferable to that chosen by Sir Hew Dalrymple, as it enabled him to keep his force concentrated, and to draw supplies from the fleet. That with respect to the armistice concluded with General Kellerman, he positively denied that he was the negotiator ; and although he certainly had signed it, yet he disclaimed all responsibility for its honour ; that though he thought it expedient that the French should be allowed to evacuate Portugal, yet to some of the minor terms he could not agree, but most of the objections he made were overruled by Sir Hew Dalrymple ; that he was of opinion that the Russian fleet should not be included in a treaty with the French, but that any thing done with respect to them should be the subject of a distinct treaty, and with themselves, as they had acted a neutral part whilst in the Tagus."

Sir Arthur went on to state, that he had been called by Sir Hew out of another room to sign the treaty, which he read throughout ; and, after making the observation that it was a most extraordinary one, he signed it, but without at all making himself responsible for its contents, and particularly condemning the want of stipulations for the 5000 Spaniards in the hulks on the Tagus.

The clear and straightforward evidence of Sir Arthur Wellesley proved satisfactory no less to the Board of Inquiry, than to the country at large. As an individual he had shown himself to be an active and intelligent agent, as a principal he had taken the most correct views and given the best advice, and he could not be responsible for these not being followed.

If the conduct, therefore, of General Wellesley, as regarded this obnoxious convention, was perfectly upright and blameless, how much more have we reason to admire the prudence and moderation he displayed in the full tide of victory. Thwarted and annoyed as he had been, and constrained to resign the fruits of his skill and arduous labours when within his grasp, he did not the less, when the glorious opportunity of attaining his final object had been suffered to pass before his eyes, refuse to sanction

other means of success, and saw the necessity of at once acceding to the *principle* of a convention. And what was the remarkable observation made by Colonel Torrens, on his examination before the court, but additional evidence, if any were wanting, of the correctness of the view we have taken of General Wellesley's share in this transaction? "It had, indeed, become an indispensable and politic measure, when the great leader of the war had been twice prevented *from negotiating only with his own genius and the old British valour.*"

In reply to a question of the court, he declared that immediately after the defeat of the French right column, and during its precipitate retreat, Sir Arthur Wellesley rode up to Sir Harry Burrard, and said, "Now, Sir Harry, is your time to advance upon the enemy; they are completely broken, and we may be in Lisbon in three days; a large body of our troops have not been in the action; let us move them from the right on the road to Torres Vedras, and I will follow the enemy with the left." To this Sir Harry replied, "that he thought a great deal had been done, very much to the credit of the troops, and that he did not think it advisable to do more, or to quit the ground in pursuit."

After this, not another word, we think, need be said in elucidation of the part taken by Sir Arthur in a convention disreputable only to those who, by wholly abstaining from interference with an officer inferior in point of standing, but of consummate skill and experience, would have precluded the necessity for any convention at all. This view of the case appears to have been the same that was adopted by Sir Arthur himself, and to have been corroborated by the declaration of the board conveying the King's disapprobation, both of the armistice and of the convention, which, with the reasons given for it, was formally conveyed to Sir Hew Dalrymple, the commander-in-chief.

It was observed that, during the public clamour on this subject, the general indignation was much directed against the ministry, by the unusual circumstance of no less than three commanders-in-chief having been with one British army during three days—a circumstance stated to have arisen from indecision on the part of

government. But the state of the fact is extremely simple. It is clear that Sir Hew Dalrymple, the Governor of Gibraltar, was, from the first, intended for the chief command; but as the troops could only be sent out from different ports, and at different times, each commanding officer of each detachment would naturally take the command, according to his seniority. It was not, therefore, intended that any officer should finally command in chief, except Sir Hew; but it was no less untoward than a remarkable coincidence of circumstance, that the arrival of those officers in a succession of seniority, should have taken place at a moment so critical for the British honour and for Portuguese security.

Of the battle of Vimiero, so important even with the drawback of the convention, numerous instances of gallant exploit have been recorded, never to be forgotten in the military annals of our country. It has been observed that the British army was almost wholly unprovided with cavalry; but the gallant Colonel Taylor, at the head of a small body, defeated a strong force of the enemy, pursued them into a wood, where they were reinforced, and maintained his ground, till he fell dead at the head of his few brave troopers. Major-general Ferguson, leading up the 38th and a regiment of grenadiers to the charge, commanded the bagpipes to play, and, waving his hat, hurraed the men up to the very mouth of the enemy's guns, reserving their deadly fire till they arrived within a few paces of them. The enemy were driven back with great slaughter, and the loss of five guns. The French 70th regiment, which consisted of 2000 men, and fought with the most desperate courage, was nearly cut to pieces by the repeated attacks of this one brigade; and so firm, yet rapid, was its advance, that Sir Arthur, struck with admiration, exclaimed "that it was the finest thing he had ever seen in his life."

The same corps, when ordered to retreat slowly from the position it had occupied, was briskly pursued till the French pressed upon its rear. Unable longer to resist the ardour of his men, the general gave the word to wheel and charge; and, on the instant, the whole line rushed in with the bayonet, and

punished, with terrible execution, the temerity of the foe. The favourite plan of attacking in column, and breaking the line, for which Napoleon was indebted for so many victories, was here tried in vain ; the British line remained firm and unbroken, driving back the assailing columns with tremendous loss. But again they advanced in three strong bodies, and so disposed as to bear simultaneously on the British left and centre ; yet so superior was the scientific plan of the English general, that while they were met in front, they were taken also in flank by a simple change of position ; and thus lost immense numbers before they could reach the point of attack. The British artillery also evinced its superiority on this memorable day ; and the Shrapnel shells, in particular, made dreadful havoc among the ranks of the enemy. So much were the French terrified at their effects, that many were taken prisoners lying on the ground, or under cover of bushes and the high banks of some ditches in the field of battle.

The first attacks of the enemy, however, were impetuous and even desperate ; and while they saluted the English with jeering epithets as they approached, the latter received them with loud cheers. It has been described as a terrible yet grand spectacle, such was the heroic valour and contempt of death, on both sides, which it displayed. Junot frequently harangued his troops in the brief emphatic terms — “ Frenchmen, there is the sea : drive those Englishmen into it ! ” and, during more than three hours, they made astonishing efforts, aided by rapidity of movement and fresh attacks, till they were at last driven from the field more than a distance of two miles. Although the numbers were on the side of the British, not more than 9000 of the latter were actually engaged ; and General Hill, with the second line, and the reserve were fresh and eager to follow up the pursuit. It was this circumstance, which made General Wellesley doubly anxious to press the advantage he had won ; for this he had recourse to every manœuvre, and to repeated changes of position, which spared his men.

It was, indeed, hard that he, on whom the whole responsibility

of the action, on whom every thing rested, and to whom all looked for victory, should have been held back when the golden moment offered, and never was there a more painful sacrifice of a soldier's hopes—of fame within his grasp, at the voice of stern duty, than in the half-completed victory of Vimiero. And, it is not too much to state, that had Sir Arthur Wellesley, in the flush of conquest, resolved to continue his command, and enter the Portuguese capital in triumph, both the government, and the country, would joyfully have exonerated him from all blame. But still obedient to the calls of discipline and duty, which he had invariably practised and enforced from the outset of his career, he chose to relinquish the fruits of all his toils, rather than cast a shade of reproach upon his fair fame. Yet for many nights together he never went under cover at the usual hours of rest; he mostly slept on the ground in the open air; he was the first to rise, and the last to lie down; and he slept with his clothes on, his horse picketed at his side, equipped and ready to be mounted. While he himself cheerfully underwent every privation, he was attentive to the comforts of others. Ever active, affable, and easy of access, he appeared to be free from all the thoughts and thousand cares necessarily connected with such a campaign. His dispositions in the field were promptly taken, his personal bearing was free and careless—brave even to a fault. Though conspicuous by the star of the order he wore, he, like Nelson, refused to conceal it, and was every where in the hottest of the action; and when a corps or division had lost its leader, Sir Arthur was seen instantly at the head of it, leading it up till the place was supplied.

Is it wonderful that such a man should have been the idol of the soldiers, and the admiration of his brother officers,—an eulogy that is proved to have been richly merited by the manner in which he was received by the whole line, after the action of the 21st, when with one voice they exclaimed, “This glorious day is our old General's!” and when congratulated by the general officers on the victory, they as unanimously ascribed it to him—exclusively as his own. Another mark of respect and esteem was shown to him in the presentation of a piece of plate of the value of one

thousand guineas, by the general officers, and a similar one from the field officers serving under him, "as a testimony of the high esteem in which they held him as a man, and of the unbounded confidence they placed in him as an officer." It is not unworthy of remark, also, as corroborative of the above opinion, and as displaying the real character of the man, as well as the soldier, that from the day on which he assumed the command, to that on which he resigned it, only three men deserted from his colours; they were all from the 5th battalion of the 60th, a rifle corps, and the parties were foreigners. About the period of Sir Arthur's departure, they were delivered up by the Portuguese to the English provost-marshal, but were released without the slightest punishment, in compliment to the gallant deportment of the regiment to which they belonged. In presence of the whole army, Sir Arthur is stated to have thanked the corps for its uniformly gallant conduct, and said he restored to the soldiery their comrades without punishment, as the most pleasing reward he could bestow on them.

Like every great man, Sir Arthur Wellesley took a just pride in the popular declaration—a sentiment that was at length re-echoed by England and by all Europe,—that he was indebted to himself alone for his success,—that to his own good genius, and his own sword, he owed the high character he now enjoyed: a truth which did not for a moment make him unmindful of the least of his duties. When, after the convention of Cintra he might, like other general officers, have availed himself of his recall to return home, he continued on the scene of action. He took upon himself numerous military and officia duties for the welfare of the army, and the advantage of his successor, which his local knowledge, his experience and despatch of business, enabled him only to discharge. So far from displaying the slightest pique or ill feeling of any kind from the disappointment of his views, he wrote from Ramalhal,* whither he had removed from Vimiero, supplying Sir Hew Dalrymple

* 23d of August, 1808.

with memoranda, and other documents, relative to disputed points of the convention, and with a plan for the operations of the army, and the places which they ought immediately to occupy. In these he entered into the minutest details, showing an accurate and extensive acquaintance with all the bearings of each case, and a most comprehensive yet particular knowledge of every question connected with the war, a knowledge which here, as in his campaigns in India, brought the same mental resources into active play. The variety and extent of his correspondence for one head and hand, are in the same manner truly astonishing. On every subject he displays a judgment at once penetrating and solid.

From Ramalhal, General Wellesley proceeded to Torres Vedras,* destined at no distant time to become memorable in the annals of defensive warfare by those famous lines, which he now perhaps viewed in his prescient mind, as upon less authority he is said to have done the plains of Waterloo, when there was not the most distant prospect they would ever become the arena of his last and greatest triumph. How honourable then to his character as a man—to one gifted with genius and powers so comprehensive, to be earnestly engaged, while giving up his command to another, in recommending the particular merits and services of his officers and army to the consideration of his successor, even while he had the mortification of witnessing that army, in ten days after the decided victory of the 21st, not one step advanced, or indeed so far advanced as it could and ought to have been on the very night of that well-won day. When alluding to this subject in his letter to the Secretary of State,† he observes with too evident regret, yet in a manner that shows his high sense of duty, and his desire of serving his country in whatever capacity he could: “I assure you, my dear lord, matters are not prospering here, and I feel an earnest desire to quit the army. I have been too suc-

* 29th of August, 1808.

† Camp. North of Torres Vedras, August 30, 1808.

cessful with this army ever to serve with it in a subordinate situation with satisfaction to the person who shall command it, and of course not to myself. However, I shall do whatever the government may wish."

Constantly intent on moving forward, and continually active, Sir Arthur, by the 1st of September, was at Sobral, inspecting the artillery, the different corps and horses, and recommending a provision of whatever appeared to be wanting. From thence he proceeded to Zambujal, whence he addressed a letter in reply to the general officers, expressing the gratification he felt that his conduct should have given them such unanimous satisfaction. He thanked them, individually and collectively, for the uniform efforts they had made in assisting him to bring the army into that state in which it was formed to meet the enemy, on the days on which the gallantry of the officers and soldiers was stimulated by their example, and their discipline aided and directed by the experience and ability of their general officers.*

In his confidential correspondence from the same place with Captain, afterwards Sir Pulteney Malcolm, after stating that he had been at Cintra the day before, and had not returned till late in the evening, he observes, "I lament the situation of our affairs as much as you do, and I did every thing in my power to prevent it, but my opinion was overruled. I had nothing to do with the convention as it now stands; and I have never seen it to this moment. I will see you soon, if I can. I have stronger reasons, public as well as private, but I shall not decide hastily, or in anger upon any subject."†

In a postscript to this letter General Wellesley makes the following brief but important remarks :

" Give my best love to Cadogan, and tell him that I lament the result of his labours as much as he does, but that it is not my fault. I have only to regret that I put my name to an agreement of which I did not approve, and which I did not

* Zambujal, September 3, 1808. † Zambujal, September 5, 1808.

negotiate. If I had not done it, I really believe they would not have dared to make such a convention as they have made. Notwithstanding, that agreement was never ratified, and is now so much waste paper."

While still at Zambujal, twelve miles to the north of Lisbon, General Wellesley, in a letter to the Secretary of State,* entered into a very full exposition of his views with regard to the war in Spain. Information of the real state of affairs was difficult to be obtained, and when supposed to be obtained, very defective. Sir Arthur frankly stated that he did not know what was the position, what were the numbers, what the means, or what ought to be the objects of the French army in Spain; and that he was equally ignorant of the state of the force of the Spaniards. He was led to believe, at the same time, that the French army in Spain consisted of about 40,000 men, of which number about 5000 were cavalry, under the command of Marshal Bessières, and were stationed somewhere about Vittoria, in Biscay. The probability that they would be reinforced, depended upon the state of affairs in the other parts of Europe, of which he had no knowledge; but if the attention of the French government were not called to other quarters, it was to be expected that the French army in Spain would be increased, at an early period, to a very large amount.

The amount of the force with which operations could be carried on in Spain was another, and a very material consideration, which bore upon the whole question; and from all that General Wellesley had heard of the resources of the country, he doubted whether it would be practicable to employ a larger force than 40,000 men. There might, indeed, be other *corps de réserve* engaged in operations on other lines, or on the same line, in the protection of convoys from France; but that it was not probable that the corps in front would exceed 40,000 men. This, however, was held out by General Wellesley as a mere matter of opinion, founded upon general information of the

* 5th of September, 1808.

state of the resources in Spain, in which he might be much mistaken.

The next point for consideration was the force of the Spaniards, and nothing was known to exist in the shape of an army capable of meeting the French, excepting that under General Castanos. General Cuesta had some cavalry in Castile; General Galluzzo some more in Estremadura; and Blake's army of Galicia might in turn become an efficient corps. But those armies of peasantry, which in Murcia, Valencia, and Catalonia, had cut up French corps, could not be reckoned on, at least at present, as efficient armies to meet the French troops in the field. It was most probable that they would not, and indeed could not, leave their own provinces,—and if they could, no officer could calculate for a great operation, on such a body.

It was doubtful if an accurate report could be made. They wanted arms, ammunition, money, and military equipments of every description, and although such a body were very formidable and efficient in their own country, and probably equal to its defence, they could not be reckoned upon out of it; and in any case it was impossible to estimate the effect of their efforts. In some cases equal numbers would oppose with success the French troops, in others a thousand Frenchmen, with cavalry and artillery, would disperse thousands of them, and no reliance could be placed on them in their present state.

The result of General Wellesley's information of the amount of the Spanish force to be opposed to the French was, that there were about 25,000 men under Castanos, then ready, and about the same number under Blake in Galicia, upon whom to reckon as efficient troops. All the rest might prove useful in different ways, but no great military operation could be founded on their efficiency. He learnt that government had promised 10,000 men to Castanos, and had no doubt whatever that a corps well equipped, consisting of about 15,000 men, would be highly useful to him. This would make his army 40,000 men, of which the British corps would be the best troops that could be found any where; and this army, aided by the insurrections

from the other kingdoms of Spain, would be the operating army against what he supposed to be the French operating force. This British corps, he contended, should advance from Portugal, to which kingdom it would be in the mean time a defence.

General Wellesley further recommended that a British corps of 5000 men should be left in Portugal, stationed at, and in the neighbourhood of, Lisbon, with probably a small garrison in Elvas. The object in stationing this corps in Portugal would be to give strength to the government about to be established, and to render it independent of the factions and intrigues by which it was likely to be assailed on all sides.

A man of discretion, it was maintained, ought to be sent out in the quality of the king's ambassador to Lisbon, who could superintend the management of affairs, particularly the expenditure of the money supplied, and its application to the purposes for which it would be given, namely, to provide a military defence.

The next consideration was the employment of the remainder of the army in Portugal, amounting to about 10,000 men, with an additional corps of 10,000, assembled ready in England, and some cavalry.

But Sir Arthur did not think the affairs in Spain to be in a state that rendered it safe to trust the whole disposable force which England possessed, in operations within that kingdom, without adopting measures of precaution, which would render its retreat to the sea-coast nearly certain. Besides, he did not conceal that the English were so new in the field—not as soldiers, but as the providers of soldiers in campaign—that he knew of no persons capable of supplying, or if supplied, of distributing the supplies, to an army of 40,000 British acting together in a body. Even if plenty could be expected to exist, they would starve in the midst of it, for want of due arrangement; but the first objection was conclusive. It might be depended upon, he argued, "that from the moment of assembling an English army, the French would consider its defeat and

destruction their first object, particularly if Bonaparte should himself be at the head of the French troops; and if the operations of the army should be near the French frontiers, he will have the means of multiplying, and will multiply, the numbers upon our army in such a degree as must get the better of them. For the British army, therefore, it was essential to have a retreat open, and that retreat must be the sea."

Our operations carried on from Portugal and the north of Spain would, as was truly observed, involve us in a line of operations much too long—the retreat would be difficult, if not impossible. This objection would apply equally, it may be said, to the corps of 15,000 men proposed to be employed with Castanos. But first, Sir Arthur conceived that there was a great deal of difference between the risk of the loss of such a corps, and the loss of the whole disposable force of Great Britain. Secondly, it did not follow that because the whole British army could not make its retreat into Portugal, a body of 15,000 could not do so. Thirdly, it did not follow that this corps would necessarily retreat upon Portugal, being part of Castanos's army, it might retire with his troops into Andalusia, leaving the frontiers of Portugal to be defended by the Portuguese and the British corps of 5000 men, till those, or a part of them, would again be brought round to the Tagus, or could enter Portugal by Algarve. It was his opinion, then, that although this corps might be risked, and its retreat to the sea should be considered in some degree *en l'air*, that of the whole disposable force of Great Britain ought to be and must be saved.

"The only efficient plan of operations in which the British troops can be employed, consistently with this view, is upon the flank and rear of the enemy's advance towards Madrid, by an issue from the Asturias. If it be true, as is stated by the Asturian deputies in London, that their country is remarkably strong, and that it is secure from French invasion—if it be true that the ports of Santander and Gijon, the former particularly, are secure harbours in the winter—and if the walls can give to

both or either the means of making an embarkation, even if the enemy should be able to retreat through the mountains—the Asturias is the country we should secure immediately, in which we should assemble our disposable force, and issue forth into the plains, either by Leon or the pass of Reynosa. The army could then have a short, although probably a difficult communication with the sea, which must be carried on by mules, of which there are plenty in the country; it could co-operate with Blake's Galician army, and could press upon the enemy's right flank and rear, and turn his position upon the Ebro, which it is evident he intends to make his first line. To secure the Asturias is the first object in Spain, and afterwards to assemble within that country your whole disposable force, after marching the detachment to Castanos.

“There are some points of detail which must be attended to in these arrangements. The army now in this country might either be marched into Leon, or it might be embarked and transported to Gijon or Santander. The latter would be the quickest operation; by the adoption of the former its artillery in its present form might accompany it; but it must be recollect, that if the artillery should be kept in its present form, in case of retreat it must be left behind in the plains, as it is understood there is no carriage-road across the mountains of Asturias.

“The troops, then, now in this country, ought to be embarked in the Tagus and sent to the Asturias, and ordnance carriages ought to be sent from England without loss of time, which can be taken to pieces and carried by hand, or when put together can be drawn by horses. The reports which will be made by the officers sent to those countries, will state whether cavalry can pass through them. I should think they might, as I see that wherever a mule can go a horse can likewise. If so, the cavalry from England should likewise be landed in Asturias; if not, the cavalry should be landed at Corunna or Ferrol and join the army in the plains, through the passes of Galicia, which we know are practicable for cavalry.

"There remains to be considered only the operations of the Sicilian corps, consisting of 10,000 men. In the present state of affairs, the government would probably not deem it expedient to remove this corps from the Mediterranean. If the Spaniards should be able to make any head against the French on the left of their line in Catalonia, and on the lower Ebro, this corps might reinforce that part of the Spanish insurrection, keeping its retreat always open to the sea. This, however, would be very difficult, the French being in possession of Barcelona; and probably the siege of that place, aided by the insurgents of Catalonia, would be the most this corps would perform. And whether the operation should be successfully included, or the corps should be forced to re-embark in consequence of the approach of the stronger French force, it would materially aid the operations of the troops in the centre of Spain.

"The result of all these operations which, for the present, must be distinct, would be to confine the French to their line of the Ebro, and eventually oblige them to retire upon their own frontier. Time would be gained for the further organization of the Spanish government and force; by the judicious and effectual employment of which, the British government would be enabled to withdraw its troops from Spain, to employ them in other parts of Europe. As for preventing the retreat of the French from Spain, it is quite out of the question. They have possession of all the fortresses on this side of the Pyrenees, through which mountains there are not less than forty passes by which troops could march. Besides, if it were possible under these circumstances to place an army in their rear, with the object of cutting them off from France, you might depend upon it that all France would rise as one man for their relief, and the result would be the loss of the army so employed.

"In respect to your wish that I should go into the Asturias to examine the country, and to form a judgment of its strength, I have to mention to you that I am not a draftsman, and but

a bad hand at description. I should have no difficulty in forming an opinion, and a plan for the defence of that country, provided I was certain that it would be executed. But it would be an idle waste of my time, and an imposition upon you, if I were to go into that country on the pretence of giving you, or any general officer you should employ there, an idea of the country ; and it would be vain and fruitless to form a plan for the defence of the country, which could depend upon the execution of another. Indeed, their task would only bring disgrace upon me, and would disappoint you.

“ Under these circumstances, I have told Sir Hew Dalrymple that I was not able to perform the duty in which you had desired I should be employed ; that I was not a topographical engineer, and could not pretend to describe in writing such a country as the Asturias ; and he appeared to think that some of the gentlemen of the quartermaster-general’s department might be more usefully employed on this service. I hope you will not believe that I feel any disinclination to performing any service in which you may think I can be of use to you ; and that I have discouraged the idea of employing me on that proposed, solely from my incapacity of performing it as it ought to be performed, and from a certainty that you were not aware of the nature of the service which you required from me when you wrote to Sir Hew Dalrymple.”*

These are the views of a great soldier—of a practical man, and one capable of forming a sound judgment upon the facts before him, from long matured experience and powers of observation. The knowledge of such opinions, previous to the narration of those great events in which he bore so conspicuous a part, is no less interesting than essential to a clear insight into the character and circumstances of the war. They are further most important and curious, as affording proofs of that deeply-penetrating and prescient mind, which divining effects by the causes in operation, or by no less singular coincidences,

* Despatches to Viscount Castlereagh. Zambujal, Sept. 5, 1808.

seemed to predict the fate of a British army, if sent to operate in central Spain ; that its sole retreat was the sea, and that Napoleon's object, should he be there, would be to overwhelm and destroy it. He *was* there ; the entire force of the French was thrown upon Sir John Moore ;—the famous retreat, the battle, the unheard-of sufferings of the British army, were only under supposed circumstances—the foregone conclusions which this fortunate and keen-sighted general beheld placed before him, as if drawn upon a field of battle. It is not at all wonderful, that a man who could write of approaching events, and anticipate the causes and consequences of failure or success, while still in the womb of time, should dislike to dedicate his powers to the office of a draftsman, and were any other instance wanting of the incapacity of a government, to appreciate, like Napoleon, the characters of the men who presented themselves (even after the Indian campaigns, the battles of Rolica and Vimiero), this of itself would afford ample proof of the justice of our previous strictures.

Can we be surprised that in his letters to the secretary of state,* he should declare it to be quite impossible for him to continue longer with that army ; that he wished, therefore, to be allowed to return home, and resume the duties of his office, if he should still be in office, and it was convenient to the government that he should retain it. Should it not be so, Sir Arthur wished to be allowed to remain on the staff in England ; or if that should not be practicable, that he should remain without employment. “ You will hear,” he continues, “ from others of the various causes which I must have for being dissatisfied, not only with the military and other public measures of the commander-in-chief, but with his treatment of myself. I am convinced it is better for him, for the army, and for me, that I should go away ; and the sooner I go the better.”

Here is fresh and irrefragable evidence of the lamentable want of every thing like conduct and decision on the part of

* To Viscount Castlereagh, September, 1808.

the British government; for when the facts stared them glaringly in the face—when they saw and knew the vicious position in which the parties were placed, they did nothing to obviate the difficulties and avoid the evils that must necessarily ensue. The great cause—the vital interests of Great Britain, of Spain and Portugal, and the sole hope of arresting Napoleon in his wild career, were to be sacrificed to military punctilio and court etiquette, and men like Moore and Wellesley, thwarted and trammelled in their commands, till the one was compelled in disgust to throw it up, to avoid being sent as a draftsman into the Asturias; the other to have his high reputation sullied—a devoted victim to the folly of others, to party violence, and unreasonable expectations.

It would also appear that the dissatisfaction expressed at the state of the army, was not confined to its gallant leader; the same sentiments were entertained by other general officers, who became solicitous to resign their posts, or return home on leave of absence. On this head, Sir Arthur pointedly observes in a letter to the quartermaster-general,* “I can assure you that I have no desire to retain these gentlemen who belonged to the army I commanded, one moment longer than may be necessary to enable them to bring their concerns to a conclusion.”

Having for some time directed his attention to the subject of a regency appointed by the prince, in order that they might reassume their functions at Lisbon, General Wellesley communicated his ideas to Sir Hew Dalrymple; but his opinions were not approved. “I fear,” he observes, “that Sir Hew will make a mistake. I have discussed the whole plan with him more than once, and pointed out the mode of execution; but instead of adopting it, I now hear that he is going to appoint a regency on his own authority, which measure will only add tenfold to the difficulties with which the new government will have to contend at its outset. I wrote to your brother,

* To Colonel Murray. Zambujal, 6th September, 1808.

however, on this subject, to beg him to make one more effort to keep Sir Hew right; and if I can, I will see your brother to-morrow."*

Whilst things continued in this state, Sir Arthur Wellesley proceeded† to San Antonio de Tojal, and thence on the 17th to Lumiar, where he wrote to Sir John Moore with that ease, yet respect, and frankness, which showed how much he appreciated the high character of the man whom he was addressing.‡

"My dear General,

"I write to you on the subject to which this letter relates, with the same freedom with which I hope you would write to me on any point in which you might think the public interests concerned.

"It appears to me to be quite impossible that we can go on as we are now constituted; the commander-in-chief must be changed, and the country and army naturally turn their eyes to you as their commander. I understand, however, that you have lately had some unpleasant discussions with the king's ministers, having the effect which I have supposed.

"Although I hold a high office under government, I am no party man, but have long been connected in friendship with many of those persons who are now at the head of affairs in England; and I think I have sufficient influence over them that they may listen to me on a point of this description, more particularly as I am convinced that they must be as desirous as I can be to adopt the arrangement for the command of this army, which all are agreed is the best.

"In these times, my dear general, a man like you should not preclude himself from rendering the services of which he is capable, by any idle point of form. Circumstances may

* To Viscount Castlereagh. Zambujal, September 9, 1808.

† September 15, 1818.

‡ To Lieut. Gen. Sir John Moore, K.B. Lumiar, Sept. 17, 1808.

have occurred, and might have justified the discussions to which I have referred; but none can justify the continuance of the temper in which they are carried on; and yet, till there is evidence that it is changed, it appears to me impossible for the king's ministers to employ you in the high situation for which you are the most fit, because during the continuance of this temper of mind, there can be no cordial or confidential intercourse.

"In writing thus much, I have perhaps gone too far, and have taken the permission for which it was the intention of this letter to ask; but I shall send it as it may be convenient for you to be apprized of the view which I have already taken of these discussions, as far as I have any knowledge of them, in deciding whether you will allow me to talk to you any further about them. If you should do so, it would probably be most convenient to us both to meet at Lisbon; or I can go over to you, if that should suit you better."

In this earnest desire to promote the interest of others and that of the public service, and indeed to be employed in any useful or active labours, nothing could exceed General Wellesley's known kindness and nobleness of conduct. It was on this ground only, that after having discharged the multifarious duties depending upon him, he requested leave to return to England to find employment in the business of his office.

"The situation of my office of chief secretary in Ireland, of which the duties have been done lately by a gentleman who is now dead, renders it desirable under these circumstances, that I should be in England as soon as possible. I have, therefore, to request that you will give me leave to go to England by the first ship that shall sail."*

Upon the 19th of the month, Sir Arthur proceeded to Lisbon, whence he wrote to quartermaster-general, Colonel Murray. "I do not conceal from you that I am not quite satisfied with our situation, but nothing should have induced me to go

* To Lieut. Gen. Sir Hew Dalrymple. Lumiar, Sept. 17, 1808.

away, if I thought there was the smallest prospect of early active employment for the army ; and I should not go now if my poor friend Mr. Trail were not dead, and if it were not necessary that I should be in England, if possible, to know whether I am to retain my office or to resign it, and if there were a probability of another early opportunity of going home. I intend to return as soon as I can.

"I request you to command me if I can do any thing for you. I shall not embark, I believe, before twelve to-morrow ; and at all events you can write to me to the Irish office, London.

"In regard to matters personal to myself, I shall not enter into them ; I wish that Sir Hew had given me credit for a sincere desire to forward his views whatever they might be ; and I think I could have been of as much use to him as I believe I have been to other officers, under whose orders I have served. He is the only one of whom I have not been the right hand for some years past ; and at the same time I must say, that I felt the same inclination to serve him, that I had to serve others. I have heard from Anstruther, that the Bishop of Oporto will accept the office of President of the Regency."

We have already seen that on his return, Sir Arthur, both in his narrative furnished to the court, and in his vindication, placed the question of the convention on its true grounds. After the moment for improving his victories was lost, and the French had full time to concentrate themselves and assume strong positions, there remained no other means but those of negotiation ; and the ultimate judgment of the court, conveyed to Sir Hew Dalrymple that he was not justified in entering into an armistice, and accepting the terms of the convention was doubtless a correct one.

The Court of Inquiry held at the Royal College at Chelsea, having thus terminated, Sir Arthur resumed the duties of his office as Chief Secretary for Ireland, and in the month of December proceeded to Dublin.

In the mean time, important events had followed each other

in rapid succession, connected with the fate of Spain and Portugal. On all sides the patriot armies of Spain had been discomfited; and the observation of Napoleon, that the whole of the Spanish forces were not capable of beating 25,000 French in a reasonable position, appeared not wholly unfounded. After the victory of Baylen, and the abandonment of the capital by the new king, the supreme junta having occupied it, proceeded to regulate the operations of their armies, as they were pompously designated, by the formation of a military board. Castanos was chosen president, but not to take his seat till *the enemy were driven across the frontier*, and as if the honour allotted him were sufficient to enable him to accomplish the task without further aid, the supreme junta made not a single effort to bring about so desirable a result. Little did they foresee while issuing their weak and futile ordinances, the storm preparing to burst upon their heads, Napoleon at this very moment being engaged in bringing the full weight of his terrific power to crush the struggles of a devoted people.

Eager to avenge his reverses in Portugal, and through Spain to strike a fresh blow at England, he prepared for one of those wonderful efforts which have no parallel in modern times, and may vie with the greatest of antiquity. He was as rapid in his combinations as in their execution, though his armies lay scattered over Europe. In Italy, Dalmatia, on the Rhine, the Danube, the Elbe, in Prussia, Denmark, Poland, his legions were to be found. Over that vast extent, above 500,000 well-disciplined men maintained the supremacy of France. "From these bands he drew the imperial guards, the select soldiers of the warlike nation he governed, and the terror of the other continental troops. The veterans of Jena, of Austerlitz, of Friedland, reduced in number, but of confirmed hardihood, were collected into one corps, and marched towards Spain. A host of cavalry, unequalled for enterprise and knowledge of war, were also directed against that devoted land, and a long train of gallant soldiers followed, until 200,000 men, accustomed to battle, had penetrated the gloomy fastnesses of the

Western Pyrenees. Forty thousand of inferior reputation, drawn from the interior of France, from Naples, from Tuscany, and from Piedmont, were assembled at Perpignan. The march of this multitude was incessant; and as they passed the capital, Napoleon, neglectful of nothing which could excite their courage and swell their military pride, addressed to them one of those nervous orations that shoot like fire to the breast of a real soldier. In the tranquillity of peace, it may seem inflated, but on the eve of battle it is thus that a general should speak:

“‘ Soldiers ! After triumphing on the banks of the Vistula and the Danube, with rapid steps you have passed through Germany. This day, without a moment of repose, I command you to traverse France. Soldiers ! I have need of you ! The hideous presence of the leopard contaminates the Peninsula of Spain and Portugal. In terror, he must fly before you ! Let us bear our triumphal eagles to the pillars of Hercules ; there also we have injuries to avenge. Soldiers ! you have surpassed the renown of modern armies ; but have you yet equalled the glory of those Romans, who, in one and the [same campaign, were victorious on the Rhine and the Euphrates, in Illyria and upon the Tagus ? A long peace, a lasting prosperity, shall be the reward of your labours. A real Frenchman could not—ought not to rest until the seas are free and open to all. Soldiers ! all that you have done, all that you will do for the happiness of the French people, and for my glory, shall be eternal in my heart.’”*

With these words, he bade a brief farewell to his troops, until he should rejoin them on the frontiers of Spain, whence they were “to drive the hideous leopard into the sea.”

On the arrival of this overwhelming force, it was found moreover, that the work for which it had been destined was already half completed ; but though worsted in innumerable battles the Spanish generals Castanos, Blake, Cuesta, and Palafox, rallied their scattered bands with indomitable patience, and again

* Napier. History of the Peninsular War.

presented themselves in the field. Soon long columns of the grand army wound their way through Bayonne, reached Vittoria, and appeared to take quiet possession of the country. Blake was posted at the head of the valley at Villarcayo ; the Asturians were ready to act near the same place ; Romana was moving upon Bilbao ; the Estremadurans were directing their march towards Burgos ; and yet Blake had the temerity to advance and attack Zornosa. The French general, Merlin, artfully retreating, drew Blake nearly two leagues beyond the town, till he found himself in the presence of 25,000 French, commanded by the Duke of Dantzcic. After a brave fight, the Spaniard sustained a signal defeat, and retreated in great confusion upon Bilbao ; but in a few days he was again in the field, and had a severe engagement with Villatte, in which this time he was successful. Elated with his unexpected victory, he now resolved to attack Bilbao, join Palafox, and throw himself into the rear of the French forces, as if he were apprehensive they would make their escape.

In despite of all military rules, he marched direct upon Bilbao, while two French corps were operating on his front, and another, which had already turned his right, was threatening his rear. With a boldness worthy the knight of La Mancha, he first engaged the fourth corps of the French army, and after a brisk action, was compelled to retire upon Espinosa. Here he had to sustain the attack of Marshal Victor ; General Romana was driven from his position, but on receiving a reinforcement, gallantly renewed the battle. It, nevertheless, terminated in favour of the French ; and two Spanish generals, with a great number of men, fell in the action. Next morning Blake was again attacked, thrown into confusion, and with difficulty made good his retreat with the wreck of his forces. The veteran troops of Romana were nearly all made prisoners, sent into France, and incorporated with the new levies of Napoleon. Retreating into the mountains of the Asturias, Blake was once more joined by the brave Romana ; and undaunted by disasters, they still held together a remnant of the patriot force.

Meanwhile, Napoleon had arrived at Vittoria, whence he directed the different movements of his armies, overthrew the Conde de Belvidere with immense slaughter, his brigades of cavalry carrying destruction into the ranks of the broken patriots. In this fatal battle fell a whole battalion of students who had volunteered from the universities of Salamanca and of Leon. The great historian of Napoleon's life, stops his narrative to bestow a tear upon their untimely fate.* "The youths, whom patriotism had brought to the field, could not be frightened from it by danger. They fell in their ranks, and their deaths spread mourning through many a respectable family in Spain. Peace to them: they are gone into a world of order!"

The army of Castanos, forming the centre, speedily shared the same fate. It consisted of nearly 50,000 men, was supplied with forty guns, and had the advantage of excellent positions, extending ten miles along a ridge of low hills; but after many vain heroic efforts, the dreadful day of Tudela proved yet more disastrous to Aragon and Spain, than all the murderous defeats and slaughters that had preceded it. There remained now no obstacle between Napoleon and the capital but the strong pass of Somosierra; and a single encampment at Sepulveda, commanded the road to Segovia. At this last barrier the French were at first repulsed with loss; but one of those strange panics, arising from a suspicion of treachery, spreading among the Spaniards, they fled, as was customary, in the utmost confusion, offering a ready sacrifice to the enemy. Against the pass of Somosierra, three French battalions advanced on the right, three on the left, while a strong column marched along the road, supported by artillery. The infantry, rushing up the sides of the mountain, was swept by the Spanish guns; it paused and wavered, and was seen retiring as the dense clouds of smoke that enveloped the acclivities gradually cleared away.

Napoleon was himself directing the movement; and turning

* Life of Bonaparte, by Sir W. Scott.

towards the Polish lancers of his guard close at hand, ordered them to charge up the ascent and carry the Spanish guns. He had already observed the terror inspired by a sudden onset of the cavalry among the half-disciplined patriots, and the gallant Poles rode sharply up the causeway into the pass. They were received with so terrible a fire, that they at first broke, till rallied by their brave Colonel Krasinski ; they this time rushed up to the mouths of the guns, cut down all before them, and seized the battery. Possessed at once with the idea that they were turned, and that the horse were pouring upon them, the men, who till then had stood their ground like heroes, fled with all the speed of dastards ; and Napoleon, not a little pleased with his prompt manœuvre, took quiet possession of the last bulwark of the patriots, and launched his legions upon Madrid.

By the 2d day of December, 1808, the devoted city was surrounded with his innumerable host. Having twice, in vain, summoned it to surrender, he commanded an attack upon some out-works, which were instantly carried, and then opened a battery of thirty guns upon the gardens of the Retiro, while another poured in its shells from an opposite quarter. The Retiro was carried by storm the ensuing morning, and all the adjacent positions were effectually occupied. A third and last time was the contumacious city summoned, when two officers came forth with offers to treat. They were told it was impossible—the capital must surrender at discretion, or cease to exist. The indomitable obstinacy of the Spaniard behind his walls, was even here—in the face of the imperial legions and their conquering leader—conspicuous ; and the inhabitants and peasantry were bent on resistance. The madness of such an effort was at once felt by the garrison and the authorities, and a capitulation was hastily prepared. Still the captain-general, refusing to sign it, retired with 5000 of the troops and the artillery, by a part of the city not yet invested. Napoleon obtained unrestricted possession of the place ; but was careful to observe the strictest discipline, so far as to execute one of his own guard

in the public square for setting an example of plunder and insubordination. Every Spaniard was disarmed; and save for the occasional tramp of horse, and the challenge of the sentinels, the city appeared as if deserted. The different authorities waited upon the Emperor with an address of congratulation; and in reply, he reflected upon the treacherous baseness of the people, in fawning upon the English leopard, about to be driven into the seas; and from this time he exercised all the rights of conquest. After having thus broken the military power of Spain, almost annihilating the eastern wing of the armies under Palafox, of the north-western, commanded by General Blake, and the centre under the commander-in-chief, Castanos, besides the forces assembled in Catalonia and Estremadura, Napoleon dictated his laws at the head of an overwhelming force of 330,000 infantry, 60,000 horse, 200 pieces of field artillery, and an imposing reserve.

It was under such circumstances that the British ministry, when much precious time had been lost, and a general, capable of following up his victories on the side of Portugal, superseded in his command, determined to make a *diversion* in the north of Spain. Never, in the annals of warfare, was there a more inauspicious moment selected for entering upon a campaign—and such a campaign—opposed to the veteran armies of almost all Europe, under the immediate eye of Napoleon himself. Had the measure been decided upon at an earlier period, on a scale commensurate with so great a war, before the armies of Spain were crushed, and two expeditions under the separate commands of Moore and Wellesley, directed in support of the patriot forces upon Madrid, we might have hoped for a very different result. But with a strange fatality, it would seem as if the innumerable difficulties and perils of an English army, opposed to the entire force of Napoleon, so clearly shown in General Wellesley's admirable review of the war which we have just given, were selected for an experiment, not taken as they were intended, for a warning; and not the most brilliant talents, not the most chivalrous courage, opposed like the

illustrious Moore's, to odds so fearful, could have expected to achieve what he really did—victory, after one of the ablest of retreats. How well did his conduct in that terrible crisis bear out the opinion entertained by his great contemporary, already recorded by us, that he was the man to whom the country and the army naturally turned their eyes. With a greatness of mind, above all jealousy or personal considerations of any kind, General Wellesley at once saw that Moore was the best calculated to exercise the chief command; he frankly told him what he thought, and when consulted by ministers, repeated the same thing. That the respect thus shown to that great commander and noble-minded man, was mutually entertained, is a fact that can surprise no one capable of appreciating minds like theirs—always just and honourable in forming an opinion of others. On the arrival of Sir John Moore in Portugal, after the battle of Vimiero, what was the bright example he set to senior officers placed in similar circumstances? an example which, if not too late to have been followed, there would have existed no Convention of Cintra. Not only was he loud in his approbation of the actions and the intended movement of Sir Arthur, but he distinctly declared upon the spot to Sir Hew Dalrymple, that it was his particular wish to waive all pretensions founded on his seniority, and that as Sir Arthur had succeeded in doing so much, it was only fair he should take the lead in the operations against Lisbon; and, should the good of the service require it, he would undertake any part allotted to him, without any question of Sir Arthur's orders.

These sentiments, so worthy an able general and a true soldier, struck a responsive chord in the manly breast of the victorious Wellesley, and we have shown the subsequent conduct he pursued with regard to him who thus expressed his approbation and respect.

Sir Hew Dalrymple having been recalled, and Sir Harry Burrard having requested to resign, on the 6th of October, 1808, Sir John Moore was appointed to the chief command. Unfortunately the transports that should at once have conveyed

his army into Spain, were employed in carrying Junet and his troops safe into France; and out of the army of 35,000 to be placed at his command, a considerable part already in Portugal were ordered to proceed by land. 10,000 were to join him from England, and land on the Galician coast. Overcoming all difficulties, General Moore completed his arrangements with extraordinary rapidity, and in less than three weeks from the date of his instructions, the British army of Portugal was already on its march. Nothing, it has been observed, but the most ardent zeal, and the greatest possible exertion, could so soon have accomplished this important object. Had the like zeal, and the like exertion, informed by clear views and directed to great aims, been manifested at home, 60,000 British soldiers should at that hour have been descending from the mountains of Galicia, or traversing the plains of Leon.*

The obstacles encountered by General Moore in the outset would have proved insurmountable to almost any other man. He was misinformed by all parties, but found a host of strength in his own clear views and admirable firmness of mind. The juntas and their deputies held out the most extravagant hopes; yet, like the Portuguese, they were ignorant of the condition, and even of the roads, of their own country. He was assured it was impossible to convey artillery over the mountains which form the northern boundary, and consequently sent his guns, his cavalry, and a small column of infantry, under Sir John Hope, by the valley of the Tagus. These were directed to move by Talavera de la Reyna, and to rejoin the army by the royal road which crosses the Guadarama mountains. Such was the wretched state both of the Portuguese and Spanish commissariat,† that he was compelled to divide his army, the

* Sherer's Military Memoirs. History of the Peninsular War, by Colonel Napier.

† When the Spanish commissary-general was consulted, and when the quantity of meat required by the British army was explained to him, he computed that if they were to be supplied with the rations specified, in less than three months all the oxen would be consumed, and very few hogs would be left in the country.

regiments following each other in succession, to reach their destination by different routes. Yet he afterwards found that he could have carried the artillery along with his main body in his march by Almeida to Salamanca. It has been justly remarked that good military surveys were never furnished by any public office at home;* a general must know every thing and do every thing unassisted; even without money he must provide food and contentment, and see both the troops and the followers of his army in long arrear. Still, under the most untoward circumstances, so admirably had General Moore taken his measures, that no confusion arose. General Baird pursued his simultaneous march from Corunna, while Sir John Hope conducted a division by a more devious course than that of the commander-in-chief.

Moore quitted Lisbon on the 27th of October, and reached Salamanca on the 13th of November. On the 23d the successive divisions had also reached their destination. The army, great part of which had already acquired the confidence inspired by victory, was in an excellent state of discipline and efficiency; high expectations were entertained of its exertions, and of the consummate skill and chivalrous intrepidity of its commander. Never was there a commander more respected and beloved by his troops, and yet like his distinguished contemporary never was there a stricter disciplinarian. But, prudent as he was ardent, he concentrated his troops, and allowed them refreshing repose after their toilsome march before he entered upon active operations. While much was expected from him, no plan of operations had been pointed out; the entire burden of the campaign—the responsibility—all rested upon him;—his single mind was in itself a host, and it was confidently expected by wild enthusiasts, both in Spain and at home, that with the aid of 35,000 British, and the wretched wreck of Spanish patriots, that he was to free the peninsula of some three hundred thousand of Napoleon's veteran legions—

* Sherer's Military Memoirs.

led by the conqueror of every continental nation. The information he had received respecting the state of Spain, and of its armies, he soon ascertained to be wholly unfounded in facts ; and everything he really learnt and saw convinced him that, in the wreck of things around him, he could place no reliance on the assistance of the Spaniards. He found the upper and middle ranks still less entitled to confidence in regard to their representations than the people ; and surrounded by the timid, the interested, the vain, and the artful, he saw at once that he had only himself to rely upon, and to bear the whole responsibility of such a campaign. Yet never once, while there was a gleam of hope that he could assume active operations, was he seen to hesitate or despond ; he was full of eagerness and ardour, yet so tempered and controlled by a wary penetration and correct judgment as never to betray him into error.

On the 13th of November Sir David Baird had reached Astorga ; on the 15th General Moore was informed of the advance of the French, and that they had taken Valladolid. At this time he was within three days' march of the French army, and he had not even a Spanish picket to cover his front, although it was promised that his advance into Spain would be supported by a patriot force of 70,000 men. The armies that should have acted with him had disappeared ; there was no general with whom to concert a combined movement—no government to consult—no information which he dared to trust ; and he was besides unprovided with magazines, and without money in the military chest.

Upon the 15th Napoleon had learnt the advance of the British army, and instantly took the most rapid and comprehensive measures to ensure its destruction. He could direct upon one point an overwhelming mass of between two and three hundred thousand men. In such circumstances, the most decisive and masterly conduct could alone rescue the British army from that fate which General Wellesley had himself described as unavoidable in the circumstances which he had predicted.

In this crisis, with so great a weight of responsibility resting

upon him, with a thousand cares and anxieties, that no one but a commander so situated can understand, Moore did every thing that became a consummate general, with the single exception that his daring spirit, added to the public expectation, and the vehement appeals of the English and Spanish envoys, induced him, against his better judgment, to delay his retreat, and to make one heroic effort to relieve the devoted capital. But for this generous desire at the risk of all he held dear, to strike some blow at his gigantic enemy, he would instantly have retreated upon Lisbon; a measure which, we have the best authority for stating, would have been pursued, in the same position, by one who knew how to admire while he regretted his noble daring,—who under happier auspices completed the great work which he began.

General Moore immediately summoned the junta of Salamanca, and explained to them the threatening aspect of affairs. He required from them only such sacrifice as was indispensable to the exigencies of the occasion: he could not obtain even mules and carts. His representations were listened to with the most mortifying calmness and indifference, as if they were the last people in the world who had an interest in his proceedings.

Thrown back once more on his own resources, General Moore sent orders for the divisions of Hope and Baird to join him, while he prepared every thing for their combined retreat. The authorities and people of Salamanca, on the other hand, with true Spanish infatuation, called on him loudly to advance, and engage the French as *their armies* had done; in other words, to be routed and destroyed. Men, the most despicable and ignorant, accused the English of being afraid to meet the foe as *they* had met them in the open field, and, still worse, of treachery and a secret understanding to abandon them to the enemy.

It is difficult to believe that a British plenipotentiary, Mr. Frere, who arrived at this juncture, could so far be imposed upon by the senseless clamour, and the bravadoes of the self-styled patriots, with their despicable remnant of troops, helpless

juntas, and alternate fits of foolhardy resistance and abject submission, converting war into a system of assassination,—most valiant behind their walls, and headed by women and priests,—as to question for a moment the policy pursued by a man like Moore. Yet such was the lamentable fact; and when Sir John, whose prescient mind had already marked out the time of his retreat by Ciudad Rodrigo upon Portugal, and met such representations with the arguments of a sound judgment, but with the secret contempt they deserved, he was accused of want of decision, of despondency, and taking a gloomy view of affairs. Yet, Napoleon was actually drawing round, and preparing to cut him off with a force on every side too overwhelming to resist. So situated, only a madman, or a general like Blake, or Cuesta, too often beaten to feel the shame of flight and defeat, would have marched into the toils laid by Napoleon. The system of Spanish warfare was not the school formed by Sir John Moore, combining caution and discipline with the most brilliant valour.

Still, though immediate destruction threatened the entire British army, the strong and wise resolves of this great man were to be disturbed and shaken by the attacks of creatures, actuated by the most selfish and mistaken views, exhibiting human nature in its most revolting colours. Like all the vain and ignorant, they were most eager to criticise the plans which they could not comprehend. Even the senseless cry of disappointing the expectations of England, of deserting the *patriots* and their great cause, of abandoning the entire Peninsula to the power of the oppressor, was raised to deter him from executing his purpose, and rescuing the British army from the destruction impending over it.

It is not too much to assert, that to the disgraceful influence thus employed are to be traced those lamentable consequences which ensued in the fearful sufferings and losses of the British army, and the untimely fate of its illustrious chief. The British minister, a man wholly inexperienced in military affairs, and like other dreamers, never awake to peril till a knowledge of it

comes too late, made use of language which at once supplies the best justification of Sir John Moore, and shows how utterly hopeless was the expectation of assistance from the Spaniards : "The fixed spirit of resistance," he thus addresses Sir John, "which *without calculation of danger or of means*, seems to have rooted itself in the minds of the people, appears superior to any reverse." Such was the kind of encouragement held out to the gallant Moore to march into the heart of the country, with 30,000 Englishmen, and play one of the Quixotic tricks so much in vogue with Mr. Frere and the patriotic Spaniards, of running a tilt with windmills ; in other words of meeting Napoleon in the open field at the head of his hundreds of thousands. It had been fortunate both for Moore and his heroic army had he instantly obeyed the dictates of his own judgment, instead of his too daring spirit ; and encountered all the abuse of the mean and ignorant by instantly retiring upon Portugal. In this lay the sole mistake he made in the whole campaign ; and indeed it was not his ; his delay, and his advance to attack Soult being the consequence of the overwhelming appeals of the British and Spanish authorities, added to those of the British and Spanish people. He had already, on learning the fate of Castanos, adopted the resolution of retreating. He assembled the general officers ; he frankly told them that he had not called them together to request their counsel, or to assume any responsibility, by giving an opinion upon the plans he had adopted ; that the responsibility was wholly his own, and they had only to prepare to carry them into effect.

It is hardly to be credited that the British ambassador was still urgent to prevent a retreat, and to recommend the route of Galicia, as more favourable for political reasons than that upon Portugal. At a moment when the salvation of the British army was at stake, he had the presumption to give opinions upon military movements, such as only extreme folly could have dictated, supported by the treacherous and insidious advice of Morla, the Spanish agent and governor, who entreated Sir John to advance, while he himself was in treaty to surrender the capital.

The division of Sir David Baird was already in retreat, when it received orders to return to Astorga; Sir John Hope had succeeded, after surmounting the greatest difficulties, in forming a junction with the former, when the gallant Moore having intercepted a despatch addressed to Marshal Soult, resolved to attack him before he was joined by Napoleon; thus at once complying with the earnest solicitation of the more sanguine, and causing a diversion in favour of the capital. He wrote to Romana, desiring him to make some demonstration while he marched to surprise Soult, who had taken up a position on the Carrion.

On the 14th of December his head-quarters were at Alaejos; Lord Paget, with his cavalry, was at Toro; Sir John Hope at Torrecilla; and General Stewart, with his horse, at Rueda. Here a French detachment was surprised by a squadron of British horse, and almost entirely destroyed, the enemy believing that the British were in full retreat. By the 19th General Moore had reached Castro Nuevo; Romana was acquainted with his intended movements; and on the 26th the whole British army was concentrated at Mayorga and Melgar Abaxo. The cavalry had frequent skirmishes with the enemy's horse, took a number of prisoners, and highly distinguished itself. The united army amounted only to 23,600 men, of which 2278 consisted of cavalry; the force of Soult was 16,000 infantry, and 1200 horse, and was posted at Saldanha. On the 20th, by a well-concerted movement, the advanced guard of the enemy's cavalry was defeated at Sahagun, by Lord Paget. The season was extremely inclement, the ground covered with snow; but the cavalry pushed on, and General Slade advancing at the head of the 10th hussars along the Cea, supported them in the attack on the town. On approaching, Lord Paget beheld the enemy drawn up ready to receive him at a little distance. Both corps manœuvred for some time, each attempting to outflank his opponent. Though the ground was unfavourable, Paget surmounting every obstacle, passed the hollow, and charged the

French, just as they had wheeled into line, broke them, and took two colonels, and 157 men prisoners.

It was now that Napoleon first learnt the counter-march and advance of the British, and in pursuance of his grand plan of surrounding them, sent orders for Soult to draw them on; retire, if attacked, on Burgos, push on a corps to Leon, on the British flank, whilst he himself moved rapidly from Benavente, with 70,000 men to cut off their retreat, into Galicia. "Moore," he observed, "is the only general now fit to contend with me; I shall advance against him in person."* The British general, aware that the French columns were every where in motion to cut off his communications, and penetrating the design of his great rival, was fully sensible of the peril to which he was exposed, yet confided in his own experience and the indomitable valour of his little army for extricating him, should his heroic effort fail, at the last hour. The English infantry occupied Sahagun. Romana, notwithstanding Sir John's representations, remained at Mansilla, without daring to advance. On the night of the 23d, Moore planned an attack upon the French at Saldanha, and immediately the English columns were in rapid march for the Carrion; a serene joy beamed in the countenance of their active chief, and every soldier's heart beat high with the hope of battle. At this moment came fresh intelligence of the overwhelming numbers, and combined advance of the different French armies from every point, directed by Napoleon in person. Fifty thousand were already at the foot of the Guadarama pass; the corps at Talavera were in full march; yet so ably had the British general made his calculations, and foiled the stratagems of his wily adversary, that he succeeded in gaining the passage of the Esla twelve hours before the advanced guard of the imperial

* The high opinion he entertained of General Moore is well known. In his campaign in Egypt, remarking the admirable discipline observed in disembarking the British troops, he is said to have inquired by whom the operation was conducted; and predicted the future celebrity of Moore, by his manner of landing and disposing the different regiments.

legions, so as to be under no necessity of disputing the passage. After all the delay, the heroic effort to save Spain, and to satisfy the expectations of the world, the great soldier was still in time to counteract the favourite project, the last prompt manœuvre of Napoleon, and to commence his retreat in the most masterly order. By the 27th the rear-guard itself had crossed the river and blown up the bridge. General Hope retired by the road of Mayorga; Baird by that of Valencia de San Juan, the light brigades and the cavalry held Sahagun, and to cover their movements, some squadrons not only formed, but rode boldly up to the very front of the enemy.

On the 26th Lord Paget, having passed through Mayorga, fell in with a detachment of the imperial troops belonging to the army commanded by Napoleon in person. They were drawn up directly on the line of the retreat. Two squadrons of the 10th hussars, commanded by Colonel Leigh, charged up the hill, broke them at once, after sustaining a heavy fire with perfect coolness, and took a number of prisoners. Having reopened his communications with Astorga, General Moore halted to refresh his army at Benavente, and clearing out his magazines, continued his retreat upon Astorga. On the 29th the whole of the infantry had left Benavente, having the cavalry with their pickets on the extensive plain before it. The same morning Lefebvre Desnouettes, having found a ford near the bridge, passed the river at the head of 600 of the imperial guards, and drove in the pickets. But being joined by a party of German hussars, they returned and checked the advance of the enemy. General Stewart ordered them to give ground slowly, till they drew the enemy farther into the plain; when Lord Paget, at the head of the 10th, seizing the favourable moment, suddenly advanced from the cover of some buildings, and charged with such impetuosity, that the imperial guards broke and fled, pursued to the very banks of the river.

General Lefebvre, and seventy men, were taken prisoners; seventy wounded, and sixty killed. Napoleon, from his headquarters at Valderas, is said to have witnessed this action from

the opposite banks, and perceiving the masterly movements of Sir John, and the bold front every where presented by his army, so opposite to the usual style of retreat ; and that it was no longer possible to intercept him, he contented himself with detaching three marshals at the head of powerful divisions in pursuit and soon returned to France.

In these brilliant skirmishes, and whenever an occasion offered of preparing for a general engagement, the troops were full of ardour, and obedient to the voice of their officers ; but under the disheartening influence of continual suffering and retreat, discontent and insubordination pervaded one of the finest armies England had ever sent forth. As the retreat continued, the attacks became more harassing, but were always nobly repulsed. No prudence or conduct could avert the sufferings that ensued. Deluges of cold rain—the soldiers chill and weary, wading through roads deep with snow and mud, often without shelter, or even food. The guides and drivers, terrified by the French, often abandoned their charge, which it was impossible to move without them. The sick, the wounded, and the straggling, necessarily fell an easy prey ; and a number of officers, including General Anstruther, so greatly distinguished in former campaigns, sunk and died under their extreme exertions. On entering Astorga, a fresh scene of confusion and suffering arose, from General Romana having crossed the British line of march, in so wretched a state, that “the soldiers little exceeded in number the sick borne on cars and mules ;” and as they slowly passed along, emaciated and enfeebled by disease, the procession had much more the appearance of an ambulatory hospital, in need of an escort, than of an army to defend the country.*

The Spaniards, likewise, on the retreat being determined upon, became, as usual, inhospitable, and even hostile. Every where along the route, instead of receiving the wet, the hungry, and the wearied, they closed their windows and barred their doors

* Colone^l Jones. Historical View, &c.

—conduct that provoked retaliation, and doors were broken open and excesses committed, as if the army was in the country of an enemy. Some hundreds sallied forth to plunder the wine-vaults at Bembibre, and they were thus often surprised and massacred by the advanced guard of the enemy. Yet while the spirit of insubordination was, at times, so strong as to call down the severity of the commander, till some examples were made, at Villa Franca, at Calcabellos, and other places; whenever a front was shown to the enemy, the old discipline, firmness and eagerness for battle, returned. In one of these encounters, General Colbert, an admirable soldier, conspicuous in all the European campaigns, and so finely formed, as to have been pronounced a perfect model by the sculptor Canova, fell gallantly, fighting at the head of his horse.

In the march from Villa Franca to Lugo, a rough and mountainous tract, the order of precedence was changed, and the British cavalry in turn was covered by the infantry, which took up the rear. On the 5th of January Sir John abandoned his intention of embarking at Vigo, and fixed upon Corunna as affording greater facilities for protecting and embarking his army. The rear-guard had reached Herrerias, the division of Baird was at Nogales, and Generals Hope and Fraser were near Lugo. Sir John, having here resolved to give battle to the enemy, sent orders to the different divisions to rally and form. The passage of the bridge at Constantino, which offered every advantage to the enemy, was most ably and skilfully effected; General Paget held his ground in gallant style till nightfall; and on the 7th, Sir John had drawn up his army in order of battle. Soult soon made his appearance, reconnoiting the English centre with four guns and several squadrons. A heavy cannonade first drove him from the centre, and on the left he was charged by some light brigades, under the eye of Moore himself, and repulsed with severe loss. On this occasion, a body of the enemy having driven in a few of our light troops, and turned the flank of the pickets on the 92d, Sir John rallied

them on the instant, and himself headed them back till Major Roberts coming up, led the men forward, charging the French in flank, and after killing the officer in command, and having his cloak nearly riddled with bullets, two of which passed through his right hand, repulsed the enemy with a loss of one hundred and eighty-five prisoners, and eighty killed.

During the 8th the two armies remained in presence of each other; but Soult, having been already so roughly handled, declined the attack. In the night, having left fires on his position to deceive the enemy, Moore resumed his retreat. The high roads were now deluged with sleet and rain; two divisions mistook the route; a terrific storm added to the confusion, and in the morning they still found themselves near the heights of Lugo. When the army at length reached Betanzos, it had lost upwards of 2000 men. Here the general again halted, and by great exertions, restored order and discipline, affording also the fugitives and stragglers their last chance of rejoining their colours. But the heroic labours, and the sufferings of this memorable retreat—conspicuous above any retreat on record since the days of Xenophon for its ability, its struggles, and the splendour of its actions, were at last drawing to a close. Human nature could scarcely endure more: in the bravest heart the longing for rest absorbed every other feeling; Corunna was on the lips of all—it was in view—it was reached; yet another battle—another victory, and the wearied soldier, no longer harassed in frame and spirit, would sink on his laurels to repose.

With astonishing celerity, every disposition was made for immediate embarkation; but the transports were not yet arrived. The land front of the fortress was speedily strengthened; the sea-face dismantled; and here, in the reception of the British, and in the incessant labours necessary, it is only justice to the people to state, that they assisted in every way to the very utmost of their power. The town itself, protected by batteries and guns at all points, is commanded by heights with-

in a short distance, so as to render it impracticable for the English general to have stood a protracted siege. The citadel is, in reality, a small town ; it contains the houses of people of distinction, and several convents. There are a number of narrow streets, in which the houses are very large, and the ground floors are used entirely for public offices. Although the weather, on the arrival of the British, was extremely cold and inclement, the use of any kind of artificial heat was a luxury they could not enjoy.

On the 13th a magazine of 4000 barrels of powder was set fire to on a hill, three miles from the city, to prevent its falling into the hands of the enemy.* So great was the explosion, that the town shook to its centre, the waves of the ocean were fearfully agitated, and as described by one who heard it, every one for a moment held his breath and stood aghast. The horses of the cavalry were next brought out and shot ; they would have been useless in the ensuing conflict, and it was determined they should not suffer more by falling into the hands of the enemy. On the evening of the 14th the transports entered the harbour, and the sick, the artillery, and the dragoons were forthwith put on board. During the ensuing day and night the whole of the baggage had followed, and it was resolved to withdraw the army on the evening of the 16th. But at two in the afternoon was heard the French *rappel* beating to arms ; troops were seen moving to the enemy's left flank, and strong columns of attack to the extremity of that commanding position he had taken on the 16th, in the immediate front of the British.

The English army, about 15,000 strong, was drawn up on a range of low hills, in the best position their numbers permitted them to occupy. On a higher range, which commanded the former within cannon-shot, the French were eagerly preparing for the attack, both with light guns and a battery of heavier calibre ; and a force of not less than 20,000 men.

* Napier.

A brisk cannonade was opened to cover the advance of three heavy columns, which came steadily down from the heights. The first of these, with great impetuosity, fell upon the British right, assailing General Baird's division both in front and flank. The second, with equal vigour attacked the centre; and the third moved upon the left, where Sir John Hope held the command. Once more, full of hope and ardour, the commander-in-chief, mounting the horse which stood ready for him, flew to the point which he knew was most seriously threatened, near the village of Elvina, on the British right. The thunder of the guns, and the roll of the musketry, was there the most terrible; but he made his dispositions, and saw them executed in the midst of all difficulties with a serene joy. The greatest effort of the enemy was met and foiled by Sir John and the division of Baird, who charged at the head of the 42d, and by the brigade under Lord William Bentinck. The village was an object of the utmost importance on both sides, and was severely contested; Sir David Baird here received a wound which compelled him to retire; but Sir John, ever present in the greatest peril, directed every movement. By his great personal exertions, united to able dispositions, though with so inferior a force, the battle was going well. When the French artillery first bore down from the heights, and the infantry on both sides engaged, they were for some time separated by the stone walls and hedges which intersected the ground. As they drew nearer it was observed that the French line extended beyond the right flank of the British; and a body of the enemy was moving up the valley to turn it. Instantly the half of the 4th regiment, refusing their right, fell back, and made an obtuse angle with the other half. In this position they began a heavy flanking fire, in a style that so pleased their commander, that he rode up and called out it was exactly as he would have it done. He then galloped to the 50th regiment, commanded by Majors Napier and Stanhope, just as they got over an enclosure in their front, and charged up to the guns most gallantly. "Well done the 50th! Well done my majors!" exclaimed the general

alluding to their having both been advanced to the rank they held by his means ; and within a few minutes that he joined them, the enemy was driven with great slaughter from the village, Major Stanhope, the second son of Earl Stanhope, and nephew to the late Mr. Pitt, receiving a mortal wound in the pursuit, and Major Napier being wounded and taken prisoner.

After taking the village, which was again attacked, Sir John joined the 42d, and addressing them in the brief words, " Highlanders ! remember Egypt," they rushed to the charge, driving all before them, till they were stopped by a high wall. The general, still at their head, thanked them for their good conduct, and despatched Captain Hardinge to order up a battalion of guards to the left flank of the Highlanders. Their officers, aware that their ammunition was nearly exhausted, supposed they were to be relieved, and began to fall back. "Join your comrades, my brave 42d," exclaimed Sir John, "ammunition is coming, and you have your bayonets!"

In a moment all were again in movement ; and in this brief interval Captain Hardinge returned, announcing the approach of the guards. While still speaking, and directing the general's attention to the exact position of the battalion, a hot fire was incessantly playing on the spot. The commander-in-chief was too conspicuous by the orders he wore, and shortly after Sir David Baird was borne from the field, he was struck to the ground by a cannon-ball. He was not even stunned for the moment ; his mental energy was unimpaired ; and he sat up. Captain Hardinge threw himself from his horse, took him by the hand, and seeing that he was much hurt, to allay his evident anxiety, assured him the 52d were still advancing. His eye immediately brightened, and he gazed intently in the direction where he last saw his favourite regiment. His friend Colonel Graham now approached, and dismounted to assist him. Observing the composure of his features, he expressed a hope that he was not much hurt ; then perceiving the horrid laceration on the left breast and shoulder, rode off for surgeons.

Meantime, he was borne from the field by a sergeant of the 42d and some soldiers ; and Captain Hardinge observing that the hilt of his sword had struck upon his wound, causing him a sudden pang wished to remove it. "No, said the general; it is as well as it is : I had rather it should go out of the field with me !" On his way, calling to mind that Sir David Baird was wounded, he told Captain Hardinge to report his case to General Hope, who at once assumed the command. On the disaster being made known to Baird he ordered the surgeons employed in dressing his arm to leave him, and run to Sir John Moore. They obeyed him, but on approaching the commander-in-chief he calmly said, "you can be of no service to me; go to the soldiers to whom you may be useful." As he was borne along he repeatedly asked the soldiers to stop to see how the battle went, and expressed pleasure when the firing grew fainter. At one time a spring waggon passed him, conveying Colonel Wynch, who had been wounded, from the field. He inquired who was in the blanket, and being told it was the commander-in-chief, the colonel earnestly entreated that he might be allowed to give up to him his place in the waggon. The general then asked one of the Highlanders which conveyance he considered the best for him, and the soldier replied that the blanket would shake him less, as he and his comrades could keep the step, and bear him easily along. "I think so too," was the answer, and having thanked the wounded colonel, they proceeded towards his lodgings. The soldiers, as they bore him in, were seen to shed tears, and in the passage to the house they met his old and faithful servant, who stood speechless and terrified at the spectacle ; but Sir John fixing his eye upon him said, smiling, "My friend, this is nothing." Colonel Anderson, whom he met by the way, and whom he requested not to leave him, was at his side, and he has left us the following interesting account of his last moments : "He knew me immediately, although it was almost dark; he squeezed me by the hand and said, 'Anderson, don't leave me.' He spoke to the surgeons on their examining his wound, but was in such pain that he could say but little.

"After some time he seemed very anxious to speak to me, and at intervals got out as follows, 'Anderson, you know that I have always wished to die this way.' He then asked, 'Are the French beaten?' which he repeated to every one he knew as they came up. 'I hope the people of England will be satisfied! I hope my country will do me justice! Anderson, you will see my friends as soon as you can—tell them every thing —say to my mother,' here his voice quite failed and he was evidently agitated. 'Hope—I have much to say to him—but—cannot get it out—are Colonel Graham and all my aides-de-camp well? I have made my will, and have remembered my servants. Colborne has my will and all my papers.'"

Major Colborne then came in, and again the dying soldier asked if the French were beaten? "They are," was the reply. "It's a great satisfaction for me to know it. Is Paget in the room?" On being informed that he was not, he added, "I feel myself so strong. I fear I shall be long dying." On being told that Captains Perry and Stanhope were present, he spoke to both, and said to the latter, "Stanhope, remember me to your sister!" He then pressed the hand of Colonel Anderson, which he still held firmly, and without a struggle expired.

Although the battle of Corunna had commenced late in the day, the French had been repulsed and beaten at all points, long before darkness closed in. The position occupied by the British army was now considerably in advance of the lines in which it was attacked on the morning of the 16th of January. By the admission of the enemy, they had lost more than 3000 men, while the loss of the British amounted to no more than 800 in killed and wounded. If this extraordinary fact does not speak volumes in support of the admirable conduct of a commander-in-chief with an inferior force so unhappily circumstanced—occupying a position on the verge of the sea, within the range of the enemy's artillery, placed on heights that commanded their position, we are at a loss to conceive in what *genius, knowledge, and ability, in the practical branches of war*

can be said to consist. He had before established his fame by his high conduct in the West Indies, in Holland, in Egypt, in Corsica, and in Sweden. But never had he appeared so great as in the desperate circumstances in which the folly and treachery of others had placed him, when standing alone with his gallant little army amidst the wreck of the military power of an entire nation, deserted by government and its allies, and decoyed on to his destruction ; he yet held all his enemies at bay — turned retreat itself into a succession of triumphs, and died the glorious death he had wished for, in the arms of victory. And it was his next wish to be interred wheresoever he fell. “ From a sentiment of veneration,” says his biographer,* “ that has been felt in every age, the corpse of a man who has excited admiration cannot be neglected as common clay. This impression leads mankind sometimes to treat an inanimate body with peculiar respect. This was now the subject of deliberation among the military friends of Sir John Moore, when Colonel Anderson informed them that he had often heard the general declare, that if he was killed in battle he wished to be buried where he had fallen. General Hope and Colonel Graham immediately acceded to his suggestion, and it was determined that the body should be interred in the ramparts of the citadel of Corunna. At midnight he was borne to the spot by Colonel Graham, Major Colborne, and his aides-de-camp ; the soldiers dug his grave, and by soldiers after this day of victory was he interred. As he had appeared arrayed in the field, so was he laid in his bed of honour, wrapt in his military cloak, and left alone in his glory,— a glory no enemy dare assail. The last offices of his sorrowing friends and soldiers being paid, they withdrew slowly and sad to rejoin their companions already on board, every thing being prepared for their departure.

If loved and revered, as few men, and fewer commanders have ever been, by his relatives and friends, Moore also extorted the respect and admiration of his enemies ; and the noble-minded

* Life of Sir John Moore.

foe he had just vanquished erected a monument to his honour, and sighed over his grave.* As his last words expressed a hope that England would be satisfied, that his country would do him justice, so he earned the bright reward he sought by the manner in which his memory has been cherished.

At five in the morning of the 17th, the last of the pickets were withdrawn, without the enemy having attempted further to interrupt the embarkation. The weather was tempestuous, and there were other difficulties to contend with. The enemy taking possession of the vacant heights of Santa Lucia, brought their artillery to play upon the rear-guard on the beach, which obliged several of the transports to cut or slip, and the remainder of the embarkation was completed at a sandy beach outside the town.

* And again when, thirty years having elapsed, Soult beheld the British hero's monument in England, on an occasion of general jubilee and festivity, he is said by those present to have been deeply affected, and to have dwelt on the noble and amiable qualities of his great rival.

CHAPTER VII.

(1809 to 1814.)

Progress of the war in Portugal—Successes of Soult—The Spanish campaign—Defeat of the patriots—Siege of Saragossa—the British in Catalonia—Thanks of parliament—Sir Arthur Wellesley sails for Lisbon—Plan of the campaign—Surprise of Soult in Oporto—Pursuit of the French—Their evacuation of Portugal—Moderate and cautious measures of the British general—Interview with General Cuesta—His impracticable character—Curious anecdotes—Battle of Talavera—Desperate conflict—Defeat of the French—Strange conduct of Cuesta—Difficulties of the British army—On the point of being cut off—In full retreat.

AFTER the victory gained by the gallant and lamented Moore, at Corunna, under circumstances which rendered it one of the most honourable recorded in the annals of British warfare, that city maintained its good faith by refusing to yield until the English fleet had cleared the port and was on the seas. The French commander took possession of this place on the 19th of January, when it formally surrendered; and he next laid siege to Ferrol, a regular fortress, well garrisoned, which, betrayed by its governor, at once opened the way to the conquest of Galicia, and without an enemy to oppose him, Marshal Soult established his quarters at St. Jago de Compostella.

Having refreshed his army, within six days he was again in motion, marching, according to orders received from Napoleon, directly upon Oporto. At the head of 20,000 men this active general soon reached the banks of the Minho—the frontier line of Portugal, ill protected by a few old walled towns opposite to which are some Spanish fortresses in the same dil-

pitated condition. The broad and rapid stream was the only obstacle that presented itself; it was swollen by the wintry torrent; the boats had been carefully removed, and the people, militia and peasantry, appeared in arms upon the southern bank. Soult, however, soon overcame the difficulty; he transported large boats from the harbour and forts of Guardia to Campo Santos, overland. With the most indefatigable labour they were brought, together with some heavy guns, by the help of rollers more than two miles over broken hilly ground.

His subsequent operations were harassed, and often strongly opposed, by the Spaniards on one side, and the Portuguese on the other, and before entering Oreuse, on the 19th of February, he had to sustain several severe conflicts with both. Seizing the bridge, and making Tuy a place of arms, he pressed forward upon Oporto. General Freire, with a large but weak and undisciplined force, had his head-quarters at Braga. General Silveira, with a smaller one, was in Tras os Montes, Romana at the head of 9000 men, occupied Coimbra and Monterey. The two last were in communication, and agreeing to act in concert, they formed a sort of first line, which, like their agreement, was likely to be broken at the first sight of the enemy. They amounted to about 16,000 men, with a line which extended from Monterey to near Chaves, a distance of fifteen miles!

The second line was formed by Freire, at the head of 25,000 men, only 6000 of whom were armed with muskets; the remainder being a mere rabble force provided with every kind of strange inoffensive instruments, and implements of peace, suddenly turned to weapons of offence, on which they could lay their hands. Baron Eben, a German in the English service, was associated with the Portuguese leader in this enviable command. Still it was grandly designated the Lusitanian legion, parts of which was even formed into regular battalions.

The third line consisted of an intersected position, covering, as it was called, Oporto, if a few miserable remains of troops, and a vast mob hastily levied by the bishop, could be said to occupy an intrenched position to protect a city against a general

like Soult. The French had already effected the passage of the river Ave, and appeared before the city on the 27th of the month. In front of them was an intrenched camp of 40,000 men, prepared to dispute their entrance; and attributing the defeat of Silveira and the force at Braga to treachery, they were, as usual, confident of success. Oporto meantime became the scene of tumult and excesses, subject to the law of the multitude, and numbers of respectable individuals perished.

With a skilful leader, and disciplined troops, the positions occupied by the Portuguese would have been unassailable; as it was they were defended by 200 pieces of cannon, and the works were fortified as well as such an army, and time and circumstances permitted. Filled with vain expectations and false security the approach of Soult was announced with shouts of derision and contempt. The French general first made a feint on the left of the intrenchments, and on the same night a false alarm being raised, the Portuguese hurried to their guns, opening a tremendous fire, which they continued without object or intermission, till the break of day. It was then they perceived their error; instead of a discomfited and retreating enemy, they observed the small but compact army of Soult, advancing in close columns, steadily to the attack. Those formidable lines on which they had so much relied were rapidly carried, with the intrenchments, all the redoubts, and guns; while two battalions entered the city at the point of the bayonet; spread through the streets and penetrated to the bridge, where a helpless throng of old men, women, and children, hurrying for protection, the nearest boats gave way, and they were precipitated into the waters below. At beholding this spectacle, the French themselves were the first to render assistance, and it is strange to reflect that while engaged in the generous impulse of the moment, in this work of humanity, their countrymen near them never paused in the work of death, committing the most horrible carnage. A few hundred Portuguese having taken post in the palace of the bishop, and attempting to defend it, were cut down to a man, and it is as-

serted that even after resistance ceased, the shrieks of women, and the cries of the dying were heard through the streets. Ten thousand Portuguese perished in the assault, in the storming of the city, and by the fury of the excited soldiery, although numbers of the French, as in the instance already mentioned, exhorted by the marshal and his staff, with the greater part of the officers, did their utmost to prevent the further effusion of blood. The cruelties exercised by the peasantry upon the French soldiers, who fell into their hands, added to the extreme toil and privations of the conquerors, are believed to have produced this dreadful retaliation upon the captured city. More than 1000 of the French, and 500 in the assault, perished during this brief campaign.

Soult had thus rapidly performed the part allotted him by his imperial master; but Silveira, meantime, having collected fresh reinforcements, attacked the small garrison at Chaves, left there by the French general, and obtained possession of it along with 1200 sick, and some stores. There was nothing, however, to oppose the resistless arm of the imperial invader and his legions, should England refuse to take up the gauntlet, which he had thus haughtily thrown down, by this fresh aggression on the independence of one of her nearest and best allies.

But England having already foiled his once invincible armies, shrank not from the gigantic contest, and the time was now come when the future hero of a hundred victories was about to reappear upon the scene. After the convention of Cintra, the regency of Portugal was formally appointed. Lieutenant General Cradock had been intrusted with the command of the British troops remaining in the country. Some frontier-towns had been garrisoned by the English; but both at Oporto and Lisbon there existed a party in favour of French interests, although the majority of the people viewed England as their oldest and most faithful ally, openly acknowledged the regency, and expressed a wish to obtain the assistance of British officers and troops.

On arriving at Oporto, Sir John Cradock found the bishop's

faction full of activity, and the populace in a state of blind and criminal excitement, ready to direct their fury against whatever object it might please the leaders of discord to point out.

Having touched at Corunna on his way, General Cradock there found the Lavinia, with 1,500,000 dollars, of which he brought away 800,000, intending to take some to Oporto, and the remainder to Lisbon, with the view of supplying Sir John Moore, who intending to retreat upon Portugal, as was then expected, might be in want of money for his troops. At the same time Sir Robert Wilson had placed himself at the head of the Lusitanian legion, a force of which the regency, owing to its having originated with the bishop's faction, was exceedingly jealous. General Cradock directed two British regiments on Almeida, and recommended to Sir R. Wilson to pass into Tras os Montes with his legion, in accordance with the views of the regency, and then hastened to Lisbon. But as almost perfect freedom from discipline, seemed the order of the day, before the arrival of the great soldier and disciplinarian, Sir Robert chose to pursue a course of his own, and marched to Almeida.

The army of Portugal—if such it could be called—consisted of 20,000 men; of which not more than 10,000 had arms, to say nothing of their state of efficiency. The boasted militia was an undisciplined rabble without officers, while the English troops scattered through the country, including the sick, were also under 10,000 men. Out of four battalions in the north, General Cradock despatched three to reinforce Sir John Moore; and two from the south were directed to advance by Castello Branco and Ciudad Rodrigo with the same object.

As the immediate predecessor of Sir Arthur Wellesley, the movements of General Cradock, at this time, are extremely interesting, and a knowledge of them will throw considerable light upon the succeeding campaign in Portugal. He had to provide for the defence of the frontier of Portugal, when the fourth French corps had just passed the river Tagus, at Almaraz, and threatened Badajoz. He had only seven bat-

talions of infantry and 300 horse. Yet Mr. Frere, the central junta, and the regency, were clamorous against Sir John Cradock, for not marching directly into the south of Spain. With more prudence, however, on learning that the communication with Sir John Moore was cut off, Cradock recalled the British, who were advancing to reinforce him. He had directed General Cameron, at Almeida, to collect the convalescents, and unite them with the two British battalions there, and do his utmost to reach the army in Spain ; but that, if he judged the risk too great, to return to Lisbon.

Having already had too much experience to rely either on the government or the army of Portugal, Cradock ordered General Stewart to destroy the bridges of Villa Velha and Abrantes, and to withdraw to Sacavem, a position near Lisbon, where he had determined to concentrate his troops. The advanced guard of the fourth corps of the French army, followed by 30,000 French, were already on their march towards Lisbon, when the advance of Sir John Moore led Napoleon to recal his orders, and Portugal was, at that time, freed from the fear of invasion. General Cameron made an attempt to join Sir John Moore by the Tras os Montes, but learning the retreat on Corunna, he prepared to march back, on the 9th of January, to Almeida. But the force of General Lapisse having already reached Zamora, he retired to Lamego, whence he wrote to Sir Robert Wilson, whom he left at Almeida, recommending him to retreat. That enterprising partisan, however, preferring more spirited and independent exploits, kept his position on the frontier, and, by his sudden and dashing movements in the neighbourhood of Ciudad Rodrigo, alarmed the enemy, who believed a much greater force must be near at hand. Reviving the sinking hopes of the patriots, he drew round him numbers of the peasantry and others who had before no standard to rally round ; he found numbers of straggling convalescents, and stragglers of the English army, thus conferring no slight aid in that alarming crisis, when the whole

power of Napoleon was in motion to surround the English army.

While General Cradock was thus laudably attempting to succour Sir John Moore, the central junta of Spain, which had retired to Seville, was urged by Mr. Frere to make some diversion for the same purpose. Accordingly the Duke del Infantado, at the head of a levy of nearly 20,000 men, was directed to advance from Cuenca against the enemy. Another force of 5000 was to move forward at the same time, under the Marquis del Palacio, from Carolina. The inefficient state of these troops, however, rendered them comparatively useless, though the soldiers themselves were active, hardy, and ready, after the severest reverses, to encounter fresh toil and danger.

Quitting Cuenca on the 10th of January, the Duke del Infantado reached Horcajada on the 12th, while Vanegas, with General Senra, who had been detached to surprise a party of French cavalry at Aranjuez and Tarazona, remained at the latter place. Instead of surprising the enemy, Vanegas was himself surprised; and Infantado marched to Carascoza, where he was met by the fugitives, who related their disaster. Victor had suddenly attacked and driven him in confusion towards Alcazar, where Ruffin's division, having reached before him, he was again routed during his retreat. Many laid down their arms, only a small body, under General Giron, succeeding in making good their passage, and rejoining the duke, by the road of Carascoza. Two others, which attempted to form, were cut off; one coming directly upon the French park of artillery, the other being attacked, for the third time, by Marshal Victor. The prisoners were marched to Madrid, and some, it has been asserted, who fell from wounds and exhaustion, were shot by the road-side. The old town of Ucles was miserably plundered, and all kinds of excesses were committed, which reflect so much disgrace, both on the French and Spaniards, during this sanguinary war. Thus the efforts made, both in Spain and Por-

tugal, to relieve the position of Sir John Moore, were, from their want of combination and efficiency, attended by no favourable results. It was the same in Aragon, after the battle of Tudela; and the French proceeded to the reduction of Saragossa. This siege—already so memorable in history—brought the energy and resolution of the Spanish people into active display. On all sides, it created the utmost enthusiasm, the inhabitants cheerfully gave all they possessed, to carry on the war. Every private house was a little citadel, the population one mighty garrison, and the entire city a bristling fortress from end to end. Every street was a line of barricades, every acclivity presented an intrenchment; the women formed into companies, to serve the sick and assist the combatants, distributing cartridges in the thickest of the fight; while the entire inhabitants may be said to have manned the walls. A body of excavators, from the adjacent canal, became sappers and miners; the old veterans formed a strong body of cannoneers; only 13 officers of engineers undertook to superintend the exclusive works for the extensive defences of the city.

The French army, nearly 40,000 strong, and flushed with success, commanded by Marshals Mortier and Moncey, advanced to summon the city to surrender. On the 21st of December they attacked the Monte Torrero and penetrated into the suburbs. From the last they were repulsed; but on the 24th Saragossa was regularly surrounded on both sides the river.

La Coste, a chief of the first engineer corps, and aide-de-camp of the emperor, directed the operations, and fell in the discharge of his responsible duty, lamented by his comrades no less than by his imperial master, for his singular union of genius, gallantry, and skill. On the night of the 29th the French trenches opened; but it required a series of the most desperate and even terrific encounters before the commanders could make themselves masters even of the ruins of the city. After the walls fell, the streets and houses became the battle-

field; and when these were won, the citadel, churches, and even vaults were defended with the same hostile rage. It was only by the insidious and deadly process of the mine which prepared a path of ruins on which to advance, that the enemy was enabled to make good his ground, followed up by a continual bombardment and terrific explosions—the crash of falling buildings, which seemed to rend earth and sky. One of these was the blowing up of the noble edifice of the university, below which 3000 pounds of powder had been placed, which was literally blown into the air and fell with an awful sound.

Famine and pestilence soon leagued with the furies of war to make the “abomination of desolation” more terrific than before,—the vaults thronged with helpless women, old men, and children, placed there to escape the deadly havoc of the bombs and shells, became the focus of contagion and threw added darkness and horrors over the devoted city. Numbers were left “in these deep solitudes and awful cells,” as their place of interment, having already selected them as their dwelling while alive. Others lay unburied before the doors of ruined churches in heaps, presenting the most horrible and loathsome sight. It is computed that the corpses and bones of more than 40,000 persons lay strewed about the ground,—revolting to every sense, and most of all to the passer by. Out of more than 50,000 men with whom the siege had commenced, not more than 12,000 feeble and wasted forms, as unlike soldiers as men, lived to lay down those arms which they could no longer wield.

Among the peasants who had flocked into the city, and the lower orders of the people, there was organized a system of terror, which, headed by a few desperate leaders, exercised a control over the regular soldiers and some of the upper classes, even, it is known, over Palafox and his party; and which had much influence on the strangely wild and enthusiastic character of the defence. The least hesitation or lukewarmness, much more any desire of entering into honourable terms with the enemy, was visited with summary execution; and there fell

some victims of this ferocious spirit before the fearful leaders of the heroic defence ; and the plebeian executioners of so stern a decree themselves fell in the siege.

But however we may condemn the useless effusion of blood, and such resistance to the death after all resistance is proved to be vain, and however opposed to the recognised rules and usages of modern warfare ; there is yet something so brilliantly daring and heroic, so devoted to the love of country and national independence, in the defence and fall of Saragossa, that though sullied by events like these, no time can obscure its glory, and posterity will continue to admire and applaud the Roman sentiment so grandly developed by the people of Saragossa, “that it is sweet to die for our country.”

Nor is it a slight drawback from the effect of the picture at first presented to us, that our impressions of the character of the celebrated Palafox, will be found not borne out by facts. The part he took in kindling the embers of patriotism into a flame,—his early zeal, sincerity, and sacrifices, prove that he was a man of more than common energy and resolution ; but that he was the noble, the morally daring and disinterested being who sometimes appears in some great struggle, where the powers of evil and good are battling for the ascendancy, to vindicate the violated freedom and honour of his country, would be a mere fiction inconsistent with truth and history.

Notwithstanding the ardent exciting language of his proclamations, and his brilliant efforts in the outset to arrest the progress of the invader, he had no sound principle—no continual spring of action, in short, not sufficient moral strength—to form the heroic character such as Saragossa required in the time of her bitter trial. His mind instinctively shrunk from carrying the contest to such fearful lengths ; he grew sick and weary, he hated “the fierce democracy” set up by those whom he esteemed the vulgar ; and, during more than a month, he never left a secure and vaulted retreat. While the death-storm of war was raging around him, and all the furies of war and discord, with famine and pestilence in their train, reigned with

undisputed dominion on a throne of ruins, the fiery patriot, as we had learnt to picture him, has been accused of consulting his personal safety,—spending these days of horror in ease and sensual indulgence. Was it in common with the strange propensity or instinct of his fellow-men, in times of extreme suffering and terror, when plague and death seem all that meet the eye, he flew for refuge, from thought, and perhaps madness, to the opposite extreme, as if to gain, by a sort of reaction, that balance of the mind which, if left to the operation alone of silent horrors, would be utterly lost. We know not, in the strange mysteries of our nature, how this may be; but we do know, and there is ample evidence on which to form a judgment, that such a shade over the character of a patriot, like Palafox, can no more diminish the lustre of his name, than the excesses committed by a few ferocious demagogues, in the agony of Saragossa's trial, can deprive her of the glory of offering such an example of love of home and country to the world. Honours, therefore, were justly decreed to Saragossa, which, like the sound of a trumpet, stirred the heart of every patriot in the tented field, or the wildest mountains of Spain.

Nor had Catalonia less vigorously distinguished itself in the war of independence—even while Moore was so hotly beset by the legionary swarms of Napoleon, and the foot of the invader was every where rife on the soil. Towns were sacked, villages burned, and fortresses garrisoned, yet the French were only temporary masters; the moment they could be taken at advantage their power disappeared. Gerona was twice besieged; Mongal was taken and retaken by the aid of the British; and the arrival of the Marquis del Palacio from the Balaeric Isles, with 5000 regular troops, enabled the Count de Caldagues again to relieve Gerona.

The French had been partially defeated, and, at the close of August, 1808, they held only Barcelona, Figueras, and Mount Jouy. The hardy character and favourable position of the Catalans gave them great advantage over the enemy; new levies were raised, the regular troops reinforced, and the

Marquis del Palacio marched to invest Barcelona itself. Although foiled in his attempt, after an obstinate engagement, the Catalans were not the less resolute in meeting the army in the field; they effectually occupied the mountain passes, and all the roads which open from the plains of Barcelona, and established a regular blockade.

At this period Gouvion St. Cyr approached, at the head of 18,000 men, bent on taking possession of the town and fort of Rosas, the works of which were very shattered, but the spirit of the Spanish garrison was excellent; and they were assisted by some English marines and fifty seamen, who joined them in the citadel and fort Trinidad.

On the 16th it was attempted to carry the works by assault; the attack failed; but, on the night of the 27th, the town was entered by an overwhelming force, and, out of 500 of the garrison, only 50 escaped, and took refuge in the citadel. A battery was opened,—Fort Trinidad was in the act of being stormed, when the arrival of Lord Cochrane, with eighty seamen and marines, arrested the progress of the enemy. Throwing themselves into the citadel, they repelled the most obstinate attacks, till the 5th of December, when enormous breaches having been made, further resistance became useless, and the place surrendered. Cochrane, having blown up the magazine of Fort Trinidad, withdrew his people and put to sea.

The next day, St. Cyr proceeded to the relief of Barcelona, then threatened by General Vives, the successor of Palacio. Upon approaching Llenas, at the head of 15,000 foot and 1500 horse, the French general was met by the army of Catalonia, which had taken up a strong position in his front. It was protected, moreover, by twelve guns, and St. Cyr was without artillery, yet he instantly advanced to the attack in close column, not deploying a single company, and advancing notwithstanding a heavy but ill-directed fire. After a brief struggle the Spanish line gave way; the guns were captured with 2000 prisoners; only a single Spanish column being enabled to retreat in tolerable order. Vives, the commander, escaped on foot across the

mountains, and arrived at Tarragona ; while the besieging force before Barcelona, under Caldagues, hearing of his disaster, was compelled to retire behind the Llobregat, after having gallantly repulsed a fierce sortie of the enemy. St. Cyr entered Barcelona, and, following up his success, attacked the Spanish army beyond the river, and gained a complete victory. Having taken the whole of the artillery and a great number of prisoners, he pressed on till he came under the walls of Tarragona, where General Redding had been appointed to the command in place of Vives, who, being superseded for incapacity, with difficulty escaped the vengeance of the populace. The system pursued by the new general produced the utmost confidence in his abilities throughout the province ; having experienced the fatal results of meeting large bodies of the enemy in the open field, he divided his forces into small active partisans to attack posts and detachments, paying attention at the same time to their discipline, and that of the more regular troops, by which he greatly improved the character of both. He was thus deservedly respected and beloved by the troops under his immediate command ; but mistaking the motives of his delay, the more rash and vainglorious Catalans of almost every rank, accused him of incapacity or treason, in not leading their forces immediately into battle. Pasquinades, and anonymous accusations of the most irritating kind, representing him in the most ridiculous light, daily appeared, and this brave commander had not fortitude to resist the popular clamour ; till, at length, his courage being questioned, in a fit of generous indignation, he instantly prepared to give battle to the enemy. He had a few Swiss regiments, and a few veteran battalions of the old Spanish armies, in his service ; and, by a new levy of every fifth man throughout the province, he was enabled to muster a force of 28,000 men. The Spaniards occupied posts upon a line nearly sixty miles in extent across a rugged broken surface, forming a sort of semicircle round the French. He moved his regular troops, together with the Catalans and some irregular bands, to attack the position of St. Cyr, but he was anticipated. With infinite prompt-

ness the French general, penetrating his design, by a forced march fell upon his centre, separated both wings, drove back the force of Castro on the right, at once defeating their left wing, and possessing himself of most part of the artillery and magazines. He next proceeded against Redding, still unbroken, and forcing the position of St. Magi, had reached, the next day, as far as the Abbey of Santa Cruz. No sooner was the Spanish general aware of his first disaster, than he hurried at the head of a Swiss battalion, 300 horse, and six pieces of light artillery, to rally the scattered troops and cover their retreat on Tarragona,—a movement by which the two generals actually passed each other, not aware of their near vicinity, each pursuing the object he had in view.

Redding, inciting the troops coming from the Col de Christina, with 1200 men, who were bravely defending themselves at the abbey, hastened to St. Colonna de Queralt, joined Castro, and reappeared, as if nothing had happened, at the head of 10,000 men. It was this obstinate determination under defeat, with an indomitable pride in bearing up against toil, privation, and all reverses, which prolonged the patriot contest, often to the surprise and admiration even of the enemy; and it was this which formed the most unpromising feature in the grand undertaking of Napoleon to establish a new dynasty on the ruins of that of the Bourbons. Having intelligence that Vals was in possession of the French, and his line of retreat cut off, Redding summoned a council of war, and it was resolved to retire by the Col de Riba upon Tarragona. In attempting this movement he was attacked by the division of Souham, just as his advanced guard and half the main body had entered the pass; but the Spaniards, inured to the warfare of the hills, and supported by confidence in their leader, showed the utmost coolness, and guided by his skill and courage, beat off the enemy with loss. Before reaching Tarragona, however, they were intercepted, and being again overtaken by the force behind them, reduced, under every disadvantage, to accept a general action. The result was such as might be anticipated, a complete rout; but by favour of the

night, the greater part of the army reached Tarragona in safety, along with their brave general, who died of the wounds he had received in this battle. He wrote his despatches the same evening, without once alluding to the state in which he was ; and yet, while dying of the wounds he had received in their defence, the infuriated populace, blind with ignorance and rage at the loss of the battle, would have sacrificed him on the spot ; as one guilty of treachery.

On the death of the faithful and unfortunate Redding, General Blake was appointed his successor, and also nominated captain-general of the “ Coronilla,” the Spanish title given to the union under one command, of the three fine provinces—Aragon, Valencia, and Catalonia ; a proof of the high confidence reposed in him by the junta. A change at this period took place in the commanders of the French armies, not a little favourable to the views of Napoleon. Junot being taken ill, was succeeded by Suchet—a man of great ability, experienced, skilful, and possessing in himself the qualities and capabilities of many other generals. A short time previous to his arrival, the Spaniards had obtained some advantage over the troops of Junot. Blake cut off a detachment of 1000 men ; and, driving back the French posts on his line of march, took possession of Alcanitz. The new commander found the French troops in a state of disorder and discontent, which was augmented by a feeling of discouragement, arising from a knowledge how deeply they were hated by all classes of the inhabitants of the country they were attempting to subdue, and that no means of secret vengeance and hostility—even assassination and murder—were neglected to compass their destruction. The first step adopted by Suchet was to lead them, as he believed, to victory ; and, with only 8000 men and 700 horse, he instantly attacked Blake in his position at Alcanitz, at the head of 12,000 Spaniards. The dispositions of the French general were extremely able; but he was, nevertheless, disappointed in his expectations, not only being foiled in his first attack, but having the vexation to witness his troops flying before the Spaniards, seized with a sudden

panic, and the columns composing his rear-guard thrown into a state of complete confusion.

The repulse of the French—so unusual and unexpected—was equal to a brilliant victory, and it became the subject of general rejoicing throughout Spain. In addition to its moral influence, it brought a real accession of power, in money and troops, to the army of Blake; and determined to make Aragon the scene of his first efforts, he made active preparations to retake, or at least, besiege Saragossa.

While the Spanish generals thus succeeded in harassing the conqueror, and keeping alive the spirit of patriotism in the great towns and provinces, even when the French were in full and undisputed possession, affairs in Portugal were daily assuming a more threatening aspect. A French army had reached Merida, and again menaced Lisbon by the line of the Tagus. Elvas and Almeida no longer held British garrisons, and General Cameron had returned from the north to Lisbon. Sir Robert Wilson, however, obstinately maintained himself in the neighbourhood of Ciudad Rodrigo, and, like the guerrilla chiefs in Spain, contrived to keep up the semblance of war, to encourage the friends of independence, and, by sudden marches and skirmishes, withdraw the attention of the French from more important objects. Sir John Cradock, meantime, in the apprehension that he should soon be pressed on all sides by overwhelming bodies of the enemy, and that it was not the serious intention of the British government to attempt longer to defend the Peninsula against the masses of Napoleon, was engaged in preparations for re-embarking the British troops, at a moment's notice, when the necessity for this decisive step should arise. Exasperated at this sight, the Portuguese inveighed loudly against what they termed the dastard policy of Englishmen, and took every occasion of annoying or insulting the troops, and even secretly attacking them in the streets. That this arose from the deadly hostility they bore the French soldiers, is, in some measure, true, though it presents no excuse for the blind, malignant fury with which the excited popu-

lace directed their arms against the lives of friends, as well as foes. The most brutal outrages and assassinations were of daily occurrence; every one accused, or even suspected, of being favourable to French interests, was instantly sacrificed in cold blood; and, without taking the pressure of circumstances into consideration, and the practicability of defending Lisbon by a few British bayonets, the mere show of retiring, led the English to be esteemed little better than the enemy: in fact, traitors and friends of Napoleon bent, in secret, on surrendering the Peninsula into his hands. With this impression, they repeatedly insulted the English as they passed along the streets, and quarrels and bloodshed were the result.

In this gloomy and unpromising aspect of affairs, the British government adopted the resolution of supporting, at all risks, its old and faithful ally. Instant measures were taken to reinforce the army in Portugal, while, in the same spirit, the acting junta, in the name of the regency, offered the command of the Portuguese forces to an English general, with ample powers to reorganize the system, and introduce such discipline and reforms as might be deemed necessary to meet the approaching crisis. The English cabinet embraced the proposal, at the same time adopting every step to call forth the military resources of Great Britain, to equip the full number of the regular forces, and to raise subsidies for carrying on an active war. The alliance between the two countries became more closely cemented, as their interests were more intimately blended, and both looked to Spain for furnishing materials upon which to build success, and as the arena on which was to be decided the battle of national independence, and the freedom of Europe.

The Portuguese regency expressed strong wishes that Sir Arthur Wellesley should assume the command of their armies —an honour, however, which being incompatible with other views, and higher duties, independently of his long-grounded attachment to the English service, he at once declined. Numerous officers, however, of the first rank and character, so-

waited the appointment, and it was conferred upon Major-general Beresford. He possessed some qualities, which were considered peculiarly adapted for such a task, to enable him to prosecute, with patience and assiduity, the rough, uninviting labours of a military reform. Immediately after he had received his commission he set out for Lisbon, and entered upon his duties—with how much success, soon appeared in the efficient state of the Portuguese forces, the gradually improving character, the higher moral tone, and the services rendered to the cause during the progress of the Peninsular campaigns. Stern and unyielding, he bore down vulgar prejudices, awed the unruly, and overcame difficulties and obstacles from which the most able and distinguished men, formed of more sensitive materials, but less enduring strength of frame and mind, would have shrunk. He had, moreover, in a short time, the advantage of the sound judgment and admirable tact of one who brought the rules of discipline, and the soldier-like habits and character which he had been so sedulously inculcating, into full and active display. English officers were appointed to the regiments, where their instructions and example were invaluable, and English commanders were, in point of fact, excepting the mere form, at the head of the different corps and divisions of the army.

At this anxious period, while the star of Napoleon was still in the ascendant, and the fortunes of every European dynasty lay prostrate under the talons of the imperial eagle, while his enormous power was yet consolidated and unbroken, and the troops of every nation helped to swell his banded legions; it was a daring resolve on the part of Great Britain to dispute his dominion of the conquered provinces of the Peninsula. It was the last struggle between the two most powerful nations of the world, and it drew the eyes of all Europe, while the independence of once sovereign nations lay trembling in the balance. The interval which had elapsed since the victory of Corunna seemed like an awful pause in the storm's career during which the battling elements take breath only to renew their unexhausted

rage. Already master of the greatest part of Spain, the imperial invader now turned his eye to Portugal, which his legions, darkly gathering along the frontiers, threatened with more than fifty thousand bayonets. To oppose this force, even when joined by General Mackenzie's brigade from Cadiz and by Sherbrooke's division, the British army amounted to no more than 14,000 men.

Victor at the head of 25,000 had just overthrown Cuesta at Medellin, and menaced the Alentejo. The moveable columns of Lapisse, 10,000 strong, hovered about Ciudad Rodrigo; and Soult was advancing along the banks of the Minho.

The combined movements of these separate armies were directed by the Emperor, and intended to obtain the immediate possession of Oporto and Lisbon. The junta of the former city, seized with terror, were clamorous for the advance and protection of Sir John Cradock, but that experienced officer was sensible of the superior duty he owed to the defence of the capital. Events soon thickened, and called for prompt and energetic measures to arrest the progress of the conqueror, and at the last hour to save Portugal from his grasp; for the Spaniards nearest her frontiers were even more unfortunate than before. While Soult was ably leading the main attack, Victor was prepared to act in the valley of the Tagus against the army of Cuesta, posted on the southern bank. A division of French infantry and a brigade of cavalry crossed the Tagus at Talavera. The main body, led by Victor, followed with the design of possessing themselves of the heights opposite Almaraz, and the bridge, where General Henestrosa was posted to defend it on the Spanish left. The right was behind a mountain torrent called the Ibor, and there was a strong Spanish camp at Meza de Ibor, in an elevated position. It was attacked by the French division of Laval, and, after a sharp conflict, the Spaniards broke and fled, leaving 800 killed and wounded, and more than 1000 prisoners, with seven guns. Another smaller body was beaten by the division of Villatte; and on the same night the raft bridge was thrown across the river, and the entire army

marched upon Merida. It was not effected, however, without some fighting, and a body of light cavalry being drawn into ambush by the Spaniards suffered very severely.

Meantime Cuesta retired slowly upon Medellin; Victor in pursuit of him marched through Truxillo and Miajades, and coming up with him, although he was strongly reinforced by his junction with Albuquerque, hesitated not a moment to attack him with a force of 16,000 men, all which he had to oppose to nearly 30,000 Spaniards.

The French filed over the narrow bridge on the Guadiana, which communicates with the old city of Medellin; while the light horse and the dragoons entered the wide plain beyond, the one moving upon the left, the other to the right, the pickets of Spanish horse retiring slowly before them.

Scarcely had the divisions of German and French infantry formed, when the Spanish line advanced over the swelling ground by which it was concealed and boldly commenced the battle. Victor describing the arc of a circle, had his left on the Guadiana, his right resting upon a ravine planted with trees and vineyards; the German infantry occupied the centre; the divisions of Villatte and Ruffin being held in reserve. The Spaniards came rapidly down, the mass of the cavalry being upon their left, and a few squadrons flanked their right; the whole moving in a sort of crescent. Giving way to the sudden pressure of the attack, Lasalle skilfully refused his own left, enticing his opponents close up to the main body of the French near Medellin. On the right also, the Spanish infantry as boldly advanced, and though heavily charged with the enemy's dragoons, repulsed them with loss, while the Germans were almost wavering before the fiercer and spirited onset of the Spanish foot.

Unfortunately the advantages thus gained were not maintained, though a battery of French guns had been spiked, and much ground lost; fresh guns and reinforcements were brought up, and Latour Maubourg returning to the charge, at the head of his horse with cannon and battalions of foot, raked the weak

line of the brave but too sanguine Spaniards with repeated discharges of grape, then falling upon them with his heavy cavalry, supported by foot, overthrew and made tremendous havoc—pursuing the slaughter, till he had made himself master of the height from which the fugitives had descended. Still the Spanish right was rushing as wildly forwards—the French falling back before the first daring, but ill-supported attack.

Elated at this momentary success, the Spaniards, with loud shouts, derided their enemies, even while their countrymen were being slaughtered, on the same plains, by thousands, and their own graves were being dug by those with whose bodies they threatened to fill them. Lasalle's cavalry returning, fell with resistless force on the right, clearing all before him till he reached the rear; the infantry, at the same moment, advancing with a destructive fire in front. The gallant lancers, a regular force under the Duke of Albuquerque, made head for a time against the light horse of the French; but, seeing how the battle went, seized by a sudden panic, they broke and fled wildly over the ensanguined plains. The day was lost;—in vain the bravest officers, headed by the old veteran Cuesta, sought to rally the fugitives. All was confusion;—Eguia, instead of permitting the retreat to be conducted in columns, would neither act nor permit the able Albuquerque to do so; the gallant Cuesta was thrown from his horse, and narrowly escaped; General Frias was taken, with a large division of the centre;—and utterly broken, the Spanish foot fell beneath the swords of the dragoons in such numbers, that having glutted the mortal hatred now excited between the armies, no less than the people, they were compelled to relinquish their savage toil from mere exhaustion. But the infantry, which had joined in the pursuit, still continued the slaughter at the point of the bayonet; and it was observed by one of the French officers, that the fury of the French fell chiefly on such Spaniards as they found without a military uniform. More than one-half the noble but undisciplined army that morning led into battle lay dead on those

fatal plains into which they had so gallantly rushed from the adjacent heights, and the slaughtered far outnumbered the prisoners.

The army of La Carolina, in La Mancha, was little more fortunate. It was almost annihilated by General Sebastiani, at the head of 10,000 cavalry, sustaining a loss of 1000 slain, and 3000 made prisoners. The survivors, impressed with the terrors of the scene they had witnessed, never slackened foot till they reached the hills of the Sierra Morena, closely pursued by the French horse. Yet with the singular obstinacy and desperation so characteristic of this, and of every real war of independence, these fugitives were again in arms, rallying fresh strength in the surrounding hamlets and villages, determined to avenge their own and their country's wrongs with a courage undismayed by defeat. They descended once more from their fastnesses, annoyed and harassed the enemy; but were again tempted to meet them in the open field at Ciudad Real on the 27th of March, when they came off with little better fortune, being roughly handled by the French dragoons, and compelled to retreat in disorder.

But new and important events were at hand, which changed the aspect of affairs both in Spain and Portugal. Immediately after his return to England, Sir Arthur Wellesley resumed his parliamentary duties, as well as his official situation as Secretary for Ireland. In the latter capacity he obtained leave, on the 6th of February, to bring in two bills; the object of one of which was to enable the bishops of Ireland, and the Commander of the Forces in this country, to frank letters; of the other, to amend and to consolidate the various laws relating to the Irish militia. On a motion being made in parliament respecting the campaign in Portugal, which gave rise to an animated debate, Sir Arthur went into a full detail of the proceedings which led to the obnoxious treaty, of the motives by which he was actuated, of the part he really bore in the affair, and of the views on which he had acted throughout the entire expedition. He again emphatically repeated, that it was his object to engage

the enemy as near to Lisbon as possible, and to have instantly followed up his advantage in the manner he had proposed to Sir Harry Burrard, and that if the enemy had been vigorously pursued after the battle of Vimiero, there would have arisen no necessity for entering into any convention whatsoever. Previous to his departure, another motion was brought forward by the opposition respecting the chief secretaryship of Ireland being held during absence on military duty. It was argued very ably by Mr. Whitbread, that as an effective office of the highest responsibility, it could not be held by any person absent from the realm, and that the emoluments of such office ought not to be enjoyed by any person rendered unable from his situation to perform the duties thereof. Sir Arthur Wellesley rose in reply, and in his calm but earnest manner, entered into a clear statement of the facts of the case, which, it was evident, produced a strong impression on the house; stronger than any general discussion, or even the most eloquent appeals. He at once frankly declared, that when he was appointed to the secretaryship, it was accepted under the express understanding that the exercise of that office should not preclude him from assuming any subsequent military command. Under this belief he had gone to Zealand, and afterwards to Portugal; and having, in both cases, found the situation vacant upon his return, he had resumed the exercise of its functions. At the same time he had, in both cases, relinquished all claim to a continuance in it; and should have found no cause to complain if, during his absence, it had been conferred unconditionally upon some other person. That it had not been so was no way attributable to him, but to the noble duke at the head of the government of Ireland, who had very kindly expressed his wish to avail himself of his future services.

This reply was deemed so satisfactory, that on the previous question being moved on the ministerial side, no objection was offered, Mr. Whitbread declaring that his sole object was to prevent the present case from being established as a precedent, which he considered had been done by the present discussion.

On the occasion of the thanks of the House being conferred on the officers who survived the victory of Corunna, when a monument, at the same time, was voted to the fallen hero in the cathedral of St. Paul's, it was subsequently moved that thanks should also be given to the conqueror of Vimiero, as well as to the officers, non-commissioned officers and privates; and it was carried with only one dissenting voice. A circumstance so gratifying was announced with loud and repeated bursts of applause.

After resigning the office of chief secretary in Ireland, and his seat in parliament, Sir Arthur, having completed all his arrangements with incredible promptness, set sail for Lisbon, where he arrived on the 22d of April, and assumed the command of the united British and Portuguese armies. Resolved for action, and confident of success, with the means at his disposal, if quickly and vigorously applied, he hastened at once to the scene of operations. Declining the public invitations with the honours and demonstrations of respect prepared by the regency and people of Lisbon, he was on his route on the 24th to join the army already proceeding on its march to Oporto.

Having conferred with General Cradock, Marshal Beresford, and other distinguished officers, and ascertained that there was no communication between the armies of Victor and Soult, he determined to direct his first attack upon the latter, hoping, by rapid movements, to engage the different French corps in detail. On the 7th of May the advanced guard and cavalry had marched from Coimbra, and Marshal Beresford, with his corps, was simultaneously on route for the river Douro. A few marches would bring the British into action; for it was Sir Arthur's object, the moment he had freed the north of Portugal, to retrace his steps, and attack the force of Victor on the Tagus. That general was nearly twenty marches from the capital, but in order to ensure its safety, should he attempt to surprise it while the combined forces were occupied with Soult, two English battalions, two regiments of cavalry, and 8000 Portuguese, were ordered to protect the right bank of the

Tagus. The bridges of Abrantes and Villa Velha, were taken up; a militia regiment, and the Lusitanian legion, were placed at Alcantara, with instructions to blow up its bridge, should circumstances render it imperative. Having completed his dispositions on the line of the Tagus, Sir Arthur communicated to General Cuesta his intended plans, and urged him to remain strictly upon the defensive, until he should return with the British, and, with their combined forces, attack Victor with every prospect of success.

The allied army concentrated at Coimbra, was divided into seven brigades of infantry of the line, two brigades of German infantry, one brigade of guards, and one of light cavalry. Four Portuguese battalions were incorporated with the British brigades; another body of 6000 was under the immediate command of Marshal Beresford; the force of Colonel Trant meantime remaining on the Vouga, that of Silveira on the Zamego; while Sir Robert Wilson was posted, with some Portuguese, at Vizeu. Soult was aware that his position at Oporto was a critical one; in front and rear, and on all sides, he was surrounded by enemies; and he had traitors, even of some rank and influence, in his camp. It was supposed they were republicans, whose object was, by means of treating with the English army, to elect a chief, and, marching back to France, compel the French emperor to change the government. One of the leading men in this strange conspiracy was D'Argenton, an adjutant-major, and he succeeded in opening a communication with the British, and even in visiting the head-quarters. He obtained an interview with Sir Arthur at Lisbon, and again at Coimbra; but penetrating at once the real character of the conspiracy, and pointing out to D'Argenton—for whom alone he seemed to entertain any regard—its extreme folly, to say nothing of its danger; he briefly refused to give any further encouragement to the project.

While pushing his active operations, intelligence arrived that the bridge of Amarante was just forced, and Silveira driven back over the Douro. The position was important; commanding,

as it did, the best road for the retreat of the French ; and Soult had given orders for it to be carried at any cost. Though daily assaulted, it was, nevertheless, held from the 18th to the 30th of April, with signal courage and perseverance ; and some excellent officers, commanding the Portuguese troops, fell in its defence ; among whom was Colonel Patrick. On the 2d of May, Soult brought a large reinforcement in person, carried it, and drove Silveira across the river. Sir Arthur, with his accustomed promptness, adapted his plans to this change of position ; and, on the 6th of May, directed Marshal Beresford to march with 6000 Portuguese, two British battalions, five companies of riflemen, and one squadron of heavy cavalry, direct upon Zamego by Vizeu.

The entire force now advancing upon Oporto amounted to 14,500 infantry, 1500 cavalry, and twenty-four guns, including six three-pounders. The troops were disposed in four divisions, one consisting of cavalry, and three of infantry ; and they marched in two columns. One of these consisted of a division of foot, commanded by General Hill, moving upon Aveiro ; the other advanced upon the Vouga. At Aveiro, the same evening, General Hill embarked on the lake of Ovar, and as soon as the astonished fishermen were made acquainted with the reasons for which their boats had been seized, they used their oars with so much good will, that the troops were landed at Ovar by sunrise,—a movement by which the right flank of Soult was already turned.

On the same day, Marshal Beresford, at the head of the corps of Wilson, and his own Portuguese, pressed upon Loison, and by compelling him to retire on Amarante, turned the left of the enemy. Having so far succeeded in his plan of operations, Sir Arthur learning the position of General Franceschi, formed the idea of surprising him ; a project perfect as to its means, and which he determined to execute in person. On the morning of the 10th, the French commander was at Albergaria Nova ; and, but for one of those accidents to which war, with all its science, is, perhaps, more subject than any other

he would assuredly, with all his companions, have been in the hands of the English general within a few hours. Some petty delay interrupted the progress of the march, till on arriving in presence of the enemy it was broad daylight; and, instead of a surprise, Franceschi was seen drawn up in a strong position;—his fine dragoons in ready line, their flank well protected by resting on a wood filled as thick as leaves with tirailleurs. Sir Arthur approached rapidly at the head of Paget's division of infantry, and he quickly dislodged the French sharpshooters from the wood. Franceschi abandoned his position, and succeeded in making his retreat with difficulty, closely pursued, to Oliveira. By marching all night he formed a junction with Mermet at Grijon, where the French again drew up on a range of hills which cross the road. Their right flank rested on a wood; their left was unprotected, and the ground in front was tolerably firm. The 16th Portuguese regiment first drove their infantry out of the wood on their right, while the German infantry attacked the left, and turned it without difficulty. The British column was already engaged in front; but soon finding their position completely turned, the French retreated briskly, pursued by two squadrons under Brigadier-general Stewart, who took more than a hundred prisoners. The enemy again took up a position on the heights of Carvalho, but continued their retreat when the British appeared in sight. In this manner, by following up a running fight till nightfall, much ground was won. The British columns passed the night on the last position they had taken; and the French, as they lay wearied with their hard day's combats and pursuits, crossed the Douro, destroying the bridge in their retreat.

Soult, meantime, was busied in making arrangements to evacuate Oporto, though he believed that General Loison still held his position on the Tamega, and that if General Wellesley should make an effort to cross the Douro, vessels would first come round by sea, and the passage thus be attempted below the city. The boats on the river were accordingly brought to the northern bank, which was carefully watched and protected.

The artillery and baggage were slowly withdrawn on the road to Amarante; and, satisfied that his retreat was secured, the French general resolved to hold the city another day, that measures might be taken to convey the remaining baggage and other property away with regularity and good order. He occupied a house which commanded a fine view of the river, and directing his attention to the side by which he conceived the English must approach; while Sir Arthur, from the convent of Serra, was contemplating the rapid waters of the Douro, three hundred yards wide even up to the city itself, where the stream wildly flows between its high and craggy shores.

Before eight the next morning the British were concentrated at Villa Nova, behind the convent of Serra, concealed from view by the lofty hill on which it stands. Having overcome all lesser obstacles, the British general was here devising means to surmount the last and greatest, and to secure the prize he had in view. Having formed his plan, his first care was to look out for a boat—a mode of conveyance of which Soult had been equally careful to deprive him. It was the good fortune of Colonel Waters, whose zeal and activity was ever on the look out, to find a little skiff which had lain concealed among some bushes at a spot where there is a bend in the river shaded by wood, about a mile from the city. Near the skiff stood the prior of a convent, and a group of peasants. Leaping into the boat, the colonel persuaded them to accompany him, and, escaping the eye of the French sentinels, they soon returned with several barges from the opposite bank. The guns were next brought up from the convent of Serra, and planted as a battery; Major-general Murray was directed to march to Barca de Avintas, three miles up the river, and seizing on any mode of conveyance he might find, there make good his passage.

It was ten o'clock on the morning of the 12th, when a single boat made its appearance at the point of passage. "Let the men cross," was the brief order given; and one officer, with twenty-five soldiers of the Buffs, went over and entered a large empty building—the seminary, opposite Serra, without

exciting the slightest attention or alarm. They were followed by two other boats, with General Paget, long distinguished for his intrepidity, particularly in Egypt, where he had displayed equal skill and courage, and, supported by only three companies of foot, he was the first to expose himself to the attack of the whole French line, should the bold attempt in which he was engaged miscarry. Scarcely had he taken up his position before the drums of the enemy sounded the alarm ; troops were seen hurrying in masses, bringing up the artillery, and preparing to crush in the outset this daring exploit to pass the river. The preparations of Soult were soon made ; at the head of a large force of cavalry, infantry, and artillery, he directed the whole attack against the gallant few who had made good their landing. But, with marked gallantry, General Paget sustained the shock ; he knew that his commander and his comrades, though separated from him by the expanse of a rapid stream, were doing all in their power to relieve him ; and the desperate resistance of the Buffs showed how well founded was the confidence placed in them, by selecting them as the vanguard of an expedition like this. They continued unbroken till supported by the 48th and 66th regiments belonging to General Hill's brigade, and a Portuguese battalion, and afterwards by the first detachments belonging to General Stewart's brigade.

Soon after this terrific attack commenced, the gallant Paget was severely wounded, and the command of these brave troops devolved upon General Hill. Although the French made repeated attacks, they produced no impression ; for at every return of the boats they were now receiving fresh support. Still the enemy's numbers increased ; the fire of their musketry was incessant, and their artillery began to play upon the building. The English batteries in reply, from the convent, swept the bank on both sides of the seminary, which compelled the enemy to confine his assaults to the area and gateway in the front. Here the contest grew desperate ; and the force despatched under General Murray had not yet appeared on the side of Avintas. So critical at one time appeared the battle,



GENERAL THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

HORATIO NELSON, 1ST VISCOUNT

Commander in Chief of all Her Majesty's Forces for the



that Sir Arthur became anxious to cross over to the seminary, where General Hill maintained so heroic but doubtful a struggle, when, at length, the arrival of Murray, from Avintas, on the enemy's left flank, and of General Sherbrooke, who, availing himself of the enemy's weakness in the town, had crossed the Douro at the ferry, and with the brigade of guards appeared on the right, removed all apprehensions as to the result. Finding by the able dispositions of the British general that his positions were already turned, almost before a battle was fought, the enemy retired in the utmost confusion towards Amarante, leaving behind them five pieces of cannon, eight ammunition tumbrels, and many prisoners.

The loss of the enemy was great; for, at the moment of their retreat, General Stewart directed a charge by a squadron of the 14th dragoons, under the command of Major Hervey, who did much execution among the enemy's rear-guard. There were fewer of the British killed or wounded than, under all the circumstances of the attack, could have been expected. Among the latter, General Paget lost an arm; Major Hervey received a wound in the charge of the cavalry; and Major Stanhope was badly hurt, whilst leading on the 16th light dragoons; besides the loss of the immediate services of other meritorious officers.

Immediately after entering the city of Oporto, where he found 700 sick and wounded French left without any medical aid, General Wellesley lost not a moment in addressing a letter, in French, to Marshal Soult requesting him to send some surgeons of his medical staff, declaring that they should have every attention paid them, with a safeconduct the instant their assistance should be no longer required. Having then directed proper accommodations for his own wounded, and seen that every care had been taken for the immediate wants of the French wounded and prisoners, he adopted the requisite measures for maintaining the peace and civil government of the town. Aware of the extreme hostility borne by the Portuguese towards all Frenchmen, he took the humane precaution of having the sick and wounded attended by his own medical officers till the arrival of

the French assistants, and in furtherance of the same generous care, appealed, in his proclamation, to the better feelings of the soldier and the citizen:—"Inhabitants of Oporto!—The French troops having been expelled from this town by the superior gallantry and discipline of the army under my command, I call upon the inhabitants of Oporto to be merciful to the wounded and prisoners. By the laws of war they are entitled to my protection, which I am determined to afford them; and it will be worthy of the generosity and bravery of the Portuguese nation not to revenge the injuries which have been done to them on these unfortunate persons, who can only be considered as instruments in the hands of the more powerful, who are still in arms against us.

"I therefore call upon the inhabitants of this town to remain peaceably in their dwellings. I forbid all persons not military to appear in the streets with arms; and I give notice that I shall consider any person who shall injure any of the wounded or the prisoners, as guilty of the breach of my orders.

"I have appointed Colonel Trant to command in this town till the pleasure of the government shall be known; and I have ordered him to take care that this proclamation be obeyed."*

With the same laudable anxiety, Sir Arthur personally interested himself in promoting the comforts and relieving the wants of the Portuguese themselves—both among the distressed citizens, and the sick or wounded soldiers. Yet so prompt and well concerted were his measures, and such his despatch of business, that he found time on the day he occupied Oporto, to address letters to the British government, containing a detailed account of the action, to Captain Grainger, R.N., commanding off Oporto; to Marshal Beresford, and, as already noticed, to the commander of the French army. During the whole of this bold and arduous enterprise, he had also been engaged in active correspondence with the Portuguese authorities, with the government at home, and with the different generals and officers

* Head-quarters, Oporto, 13th May.

in command, in particular General Cradock, and those who, from being on the spot previous to his arrival, had the best means of supplying accurate information.

If we consider the brief period employed in the capture of this important city, including the defeat of an army led by one of the most distinguished generals of Napoleon, we may form some idea of its importance, and its influence on the subsequent campaign. On the 22d of April Sir Arthur Wellesley had reached Lisbon, and on the 12th day of May taken up his headquarters in the city of Oporto; after a series of successful actions, in which he uniformly triumphed as much by the superiority of his movements as by the resistless valour of his soldiers.

In the graphic description of an able officer who served in this campaign, we find sufficient evidence of the justice of the preceding observations, and it affords so clear and well-grouped a picture both of the action and the personages who bore a part in it, that we prefer to give it in his own words:—"Every thing considered, the passage of the Douro is certainly one of the most brilliant achievements on record. The troops had made a forced march of above eighty miles from Coimbra in three days and a half; and the whole of the artillery was got on, though some parts of the road were so excessively bad, that it seemed wonderful how the guns ever got through them. From the heat of the weather, and the great length of time which the stoppages forced us to be on the different marches, the fatigue which the troops underwent was extreme. The current of the Douro is very rapid, the opposite banks are high and steep, were in possession of the enemy, and we were ignorant of his forces and defences. There were no means of crossing the river except in such small Portuguese boats as the enthusiasm of the people brought to us, at their own peril, from the opposite side of the river; and the troops that first passed had to wait till these boats went backwards and forwards, and successively brought over the remainder. Notwithstanding such difficulties, Sir Arthur Wellesley did not delay one moment in crossing the river. The

animation and bravery of the troops seconded his activity and presence of mind ; the enemy's batteries were soon taken, himself defeated at all points, a vast number of prisoners made ; and when the pursuit was ordered to cease one sentiment of regret pervaded all. The bridge over the Douro being destroyed, there were no means of getting over the artillery, and only about sixty of the dragoons had already crossed. Under these circumstances, Sir Arthur Wellesley durst not in prudence pursue, though we have since learned from some English officers, who were with the French army and afterwards made their escape, that the confusion was so great, and the troops so entangled with baggage, that the greatest part of them must have been taken prisoners, if we had continued the pursuit. The country was so hostile to the French that they could not get any information of our movements : the advance from Coimbra, therefore, was unexpected ; and it was so very rapid, that they were completely taken by surprise. Seven hundred sick were, by this means, left in the hospital. Marshal Soult's dinner was preparing, and was actually eaten by Sir Arthur Wellesley. Some of the captured generals were taken in the streets of Oporto. Many men were killed in the streets by the 29th regiment, and General Laborde's baggage was taken just beyond the entrance of the city.

"The scene was altogether most beautiful and perfectly unique ; the day was very fine ; and the tide being in, the river was quite full. Immediately opposite to Oporto is the town of Villa Nova, where we embarked to cross the river. Here, on the beach, was raised an immense standard of white cloth, on which the sign of the cross was embroidered ; the opposite walls of Oporto were lined with people, waving white handkerchiefs to us, expressing, by their signs and gestures, their extreme anxiety for our passing the river ; the Portuguese rowed their own boats, and the animation these poor fishermen displayed, and their exertions to get us quickly over, were very striking. The houses, as we passed through the streets, were principally shut for fear of being pillaged by the French in their retreat ;

but the balconies were full of people, chiefly women, and from one end of the shore to the other there was a continued line of white handkerchiefs waved to us from the balconies."

The sufferings of the people of Oporto, previous to the arrival of the British, had been extremely severe; on its recapture by the French, it had been plundered during a period of three days; numbers of the inhabitants had been ill treated with impunity; and some atrocious instances of French licence and cruelty had come to the ears of the British commander. The good effects, therefore, of the humane and judicious proceedings adopted by him were incalculable, there being little doubt, but that by his noble efforts, he saved a great effusion of blood; for not a French prisoner, it is believed, would otherwise have escaped death from the hands of a long suffering and outraged people. Yet, from the moment Sir Arthur Wellesley set foot in its streets, it became as free from violence and bloodshed as if in the midst of peace—placed under an active and efficient police.

It has been recorded that upon hearing of the surprise and capture of Oporto, with the heavy loss sustained by the French army, Napoleon, mortified as he was, declared that Sir Arthur Wellesley was a great general; an opinion the justice of which was confirmed by the fact, that while the enemy suffered so severely, the British loss was only 120 killed and wounded;—and such is the usual result of skill and valour, combined as they were upon this occasion. The city of Oporto was on the same night illuminated; and, free from every kind of riot and excess, sounds of triumph and festivity were heard throughout the streets, though, in many places, the heaps of dead had not been removed from sight.

The following day, Sir Arthur was already busied in preparations for renewing the pursuit. When he first planned the expedition against Marshal Soult, he had hopes that General Silveira would maintain his post on the Tamaga, by means of which, and by the possession of Chaves, the enemy's retreat would have been cut off, except by crossing the Minho, but even that he expected to render impracticable by pressing hard

upon his rear. Soult's attack on the bridge of Amarante, however, interfered with the plan of cutting off the French retreat, and the more as there was no reason to expect that Marshal Beresford could accomplish any thing beyond confining the enemy on the side of Lamego, and obliging him to retire by Chaves into Galicia, rather than by Villa Real into Castile. Sir Arthur was agreeably surprised then to find that that zealous commander had effected more than he had undertaken. After driving in the enemy's outposts at Villa Real, he subsequently forced General Loison's outposts at the bridge of Amarante, and again acquired possession of the left bank of the Tamaga on the same day that the commander-in-chief had accomplished the last movement of his ably-concerted surprise of Soult, in the midst of his fancied security, by so suddenly and gallantly crossing the Douro. Thus its effect was instantaneous; for no sooner had Loison heard the event than he retired rapidly from Amarante to join the advanced guard of the French army, affording the Portuguese commander a comparatively easy victory. He fell back to Mezamfrio on the 10th, retiring before the Portuguese, and on the 11th he still continued his retreat, having suffered considerably from attacks in his rear. On the 12th he lost his position at Amarante, and on the 13th he proceeded to Guimaraens, thus treacherously, it is said, exposing the army under Soult to the whole brunt of its enemies.

These events being unknown to Sir Arthur on commencing his pursuit on the 13th, he was uncertain whether Soult would retreat on Galicia by Ponte de Lima, or upon Leon by Chaves. To be prepared for either, he despatched General Murray towards Penafiel, the rest of the army following by the lower road towards Valencia. On the 18th there came intelligence that the French had destroyed both stores and artillery at the former place, and were retiring on Chaves. Sir Arthur, in close pursuit of the enemy, reached Villa Nova on the 14th, within three leagues of them, and arrived at Braga on the following day. General Murray was at Guimaraens, and joined Sir Arthur at Salamonde, where they came up with Soult's rear-guard, and

took many prisoners. So rapid had been the chase that the British were enabled to turn his position, outflanking him upon the heights, where he was compelled to abandon his guns. One hour's more daylight would have obliged the whole force to surrender, and numbers were lost in crossing a narrow bridge over the Cabado, in the darkness and hurry of the flight.

The sufferings of the French were dreadful; the road was covered with wrecks of their army,—dead horses; bodies of French soldiers murdered by the peasants; and the wounded and dying calling for aid upon the road-side. The scene at the bridge was terrific; the cavalry in passing over had trampled down the infantry, and numbers of men and horses were precipitated over the battlements. The bed of the torrent was covered with drowned horses; the banks were strewed with baggage of every description, and if to this fearful picture we add the impression of the surrounding scenery; wild and broken mountains; a rapid torrent forcing its way among piles of rocks, the hoarse sound of the cataracts from the neighbouring hills—with the rolling of the musketry—the pursuit and wilder flight—we may form some idea of the French retreat from Oporto.

Upon the 17th Sir Arthur moved to Ruivaes, with a view to ascertain whether the enemy would turn upon Chaves, or continue his retreat upon Montalegre, where, on his arrival, the British general found he had taken a road through the mountains towards Orense, by which it would be difficult, if not impossible to overtake him, and where there were no means of impeding his progress. Yet to expedite his flight, Soult destroyed the remaining portion of his guns and baggage, leaving behind him his sick and wounded. Prisoners were continually brought in, and it was estimated that not less than one-fourth of the French army, besides the loss of all its equipments, had been destroyed.

It was impossible to speak too highly of the exertions of the British troops. The weather had been most inclement. From the 13th the rain had fallen incessantly, and the roads, through a difficult and mountainous country, were almost impassable.

Still they persevered in the pursuit to the last, and were generally on their march from daylight in the morning till dark. The brigade of guards kept at the head of the column, and set a laudable example; particularly in the affair with the enemy's rear-guard, on the evening of the 16th.

On the morning of the 17th, having learned that the French in Estremadura had a large detachment moving towards Alcantara, Sir Arthur directed the four brigades at Braga to march back upon Oporto, and the different divisions in advance, with the head-quarters, received orders to halt and counter-march in the same direction. Proceeding southward from the Minho to Abrantes, on ascertaining the capture of Alcantara, and the threatened invasion of Portugal, the greater part of the troops passed the Mondego on the 26th; and for some period after reaching Oporto, the British general was engaged in an active correspondence, connected with his future operations, in making ample preparations to resume the offensive, and collecting stores and provisions to enable him to march to the support of General Cuesta, and attack Victor. He was particularly anxious that the Spanish general should undertake no movement of importance without the English army, and with some difficulty succeeded in obtaining his promise that he would suspend his operations until it was enabled to reach the Tagus.

In his correspondence with the different commanders, as well as with the juntas both of Spain and Portugal, Sir Arthur was desirous of impressing upon them the invaluable truths that without the zealous support of the people, in both countries, no military co-operation could be eventually successful against the overwhelming power of France—that the cause was that of the independence of the people—that the combined military strength of the three nations, was only the instrument by which to effect this laudable object—and that to have the people with them, the military must conduct themselves with justice and humanity, and thus make it the interest of the people to support them. This could only be effected by adopting a principle wholly opposed to the French mode of carrying on the war; which,

besides aggravating the sufferings and horrors of that war, carried within itself the certain causes of failure from its want of moral strength and support. From the first it was his determination to set an opposite example to the conduct and practice of the French army ; and he had many obstacles to surmount in enforcing his regulations, not less than in his arrangements with the Spanish generals and juntas.

“ All the exertions of Great Britain,” he observed,* “ and all that the valour and discipline of British soldiers can effect, will not save Portugal and secure her independence, unless the people of Portugal exert themselves in their own cause ; and it is particularly incumbent on the nobility and persons of great fortune and station, to set the example of that devotion to the service of their country, and of that strict attention to the rules of military discipline and subordination, which can alone render any exertions useful, and lead to that success to which all must look forward with anxiety.”

In resuming active operations, it had been the intention of Sir Arthur to move by Guarda, and possibly by Almeida, if the enemy had remained at Alcantara, and carried the war northward. But he now determined to adhere to the original plan ; to assemble the army on the Tagus, and from thence to act upon the north or south side of that river as circumstances might require. Notwithstanding the brilliant success he had already obtained, the campaign was hardly yet decided ; and he had a host of difficulties to contend with. In addition to the arrangements to be made with the Portuguese government, and for engaging the necessary support of its generals—a difficulty which equally applied to Spain—sources of dissatisfaction and discontent, founded on the relative rank of British officers in command of Portuguese, had already sprung up in the British army. More than one general officer had sent in his resignation, and in alluding to this disagreeable subject in one of his letters to Mr. Villiers,† he says, “ These will be sufficient to show you in what

* To Brigadier-general Campbell. Oporto, 24th May, 1809.

† Coimbra, May 30th, 1809.

manner dissatisfaction, once excited, works in a British army, and I must say that from the highest to the lowest, dissatisfaction does now exist in the British army. We are not naturally a military people; the whole business of an army upon service is foreign to our habits; and is a constraint upon them particularly in a poor country like this. This constraint naturally excites a temper ready to receive any impressions which will create dissatisfaction; and when dissatisfaction exists in an army, the task of the commander is difficult indeed. I am, therefore, most desirous that the reasonable grounds for it which do now exist should be removed; and I have pointed out one of two modes in which this object can be effected.

"I cannot go to Lisbon, and cannot move from hence for two or three days; but I shall let you know my motions exactly."

In this, as in all other trying circumstances, it is surprising how much Sir Arthur Wellesley effected by his moderation, his forbearance and firmness of conduct. With an accumulation of business, and a continual pressure upon him as regarded both matters of importance and exact detail, he was never irritated or annoyed, no little feelings or passions appeared to exercise the slightest influence, and by his invariable calmness and equanimity he subdued excitement and discontent, besides inspiring others with something of a like spirit, and which, on reflection, made them resume their duties cheerfully and manfully. Thus acting on the principle of a lofty duty, he may be said to have borne the elements of success within him; while the French system like the French power, based on a principle of aggression and injustice, was rotten at the core. The more extensively it spread, only the more deeply was it fraught with ruin, and like the magnificent statue of gold with feet of clay, was already tottering to its fall. When two principles like these are brought into active conflict, it is not very difficult to foresee the eventual issue of the war.

While the contest continued in Spain with the same spirited but hopeless efforts on the side of the patriots, the British com-

mander had early in June concentrated his troops upon the southern bank of the Tagus; and they remained stationary at Abrantes till the close of the month. He then despatched two confidential officers of his staff on a mission to General Cuesta to explain his own views, and to ascertain those of the Spanish generals with regard to the co-operation of the two armies in an attack upon Marshal Victor, and to drive him, if possible, from his threatening position on the frontiers of Portugal and Andalusia. By the admirable temper and tact of Sir Arthur in conciliating the prejudices of an obstinate and aged chief, a plan of combined movements was speedily concerted, and the sole difficulty was to obtain means to carry them into full and complete effect. It was impossible to advance without supplies, for in addition to the other distresses of the army, the want of money began to be felt as the worst of all. In a letter to Mr. Huskisson* he feelingly deplored the situation in which the army was placed by the continued want of all that could enable them to enter on efficacious service. "The distress," he says, "of which I gave you a sketch in my last letter, has been aggravated by its continuance, and by an accumulation of debt for all our supplies from that period to this. I am convinced that 300,000*l.* would not now pay our debts in this country. Pay is due to the troops, and we have not a shilling nor the chance of getting any. The money sent to Cadiz to be exchanged is not returned, and none can be procured at Lisbon for bills. In short, we must have money from England, if we are to continue our operations in this country. You should now send us 300,000*l.* as soon as possible. I believe that we have all been deceived respecting the supposed facility of procuring money at Lisbon for bills upon England. Where is the trade which is likely to supply a demand for bills to the amount of two millions a year? Is it to be believed, on the other hand, that the merchants of Portugal are sending their whole capital to England? And if they are, must there not be some limit to the amount of the

* Coimbra, 30th May, 1809.

demand for bills to this purpose? In short, Mr. —— has given you an erroneous view of the state of the money market at Lisbon, as he has to me upon many other subjects; he has availed himself of all that it could supply and nothing now remains. I trust that 100,000*l.* will have been sent immediately after you received my last letter, and that you will send 200,000*l.* more as soon as possible. I borrowed from the merchants of Oporto all that I could get, but the sum was very small indeed, and we are in the greatest distress."

Another cause of anxiety, and even of deep mortification to General Wellesley, at this time, was the conduct of the British soldiers under his command. Unfortunately the privations to which they had been subjected, the want of pay, and still more the want of active service and employment against the enemy, were found—as was exactly the case during the retreat of Sir John Moore—to produce a laxity both of discipline and moral habits, the consequence of which was that they began to plunder the natives without mercy. Sir Arthur took instant measures to arrest the progress of so serious an evil; and, knowing its source, he was still more eager to remove the cause of it; to obtain supplies, remedy their just grievances, and restore their discipline by once more showing them the face of the enemy. "I have long been of opinion," he writes to Mr. Villiers,* "that a British army could bear neither success nor failure; and I have had manifest proofs of the truth of this opinion, in the first of its branches, in the recent conduct of the soldiers of this army. They have plundered the country most terribly, which has given me the greatest concern. The town major of Lisbon, if he has the orders, will show you, if you wish to read them, those that I have given out upon this subject. They have plundered the people of bullocks, among other property, for what reason I am sure I do not know, except it be, as I understand is their practice, to sell them to the people again.

* Coimbra, 31st May, 1809.

"I shall be very much obliged to you if you will mention this practice to the ministers of the regency, and beg them to issue proclamation forbidding the people, in the most positive terms, to purchase any thing from the soldiers of the British army. We are terribly distressed for money; I am convinced that 300,000*l.* would not pay our debts, and two months pay is due to the army. I suspect the ministers of England are very indifferent to our operations in this country."

"I rather suspect that Sir John Cradock has detained the *Surveillante* at Cadiz, and that this is the reason why that ship has not returned with the dollars in exchange for our gold."

Thus distressingly was the British general who had so ably commenced the campaign, and already performed such distinguished services, compelled to remain in inactivity from day to day. He could obtain no supplies; command no means of transport either by land or water, even for such stores as the commissariat already possessed. His men were many of them without shoes, and deprived of common necessaries; the hospitals were full; and although the army had been reinforced by 5000 men since their return from the Douro, their enterprising general could not now calculate upon more than 22,000 effective soldiers. And what was a force like this, even combined with the aid of two exhausted and broken allies to oppose, in open field, to the imperial legions of France, augmented with the best veteran soldiers of nearly all the nations of Europe; from the brave and warlike Pole to the newly regenerated soldiers of Italy?

Of this, however, with his resolute mind, his promptitude, and eagerness to confront difficulties, he would have been the last to complain; but it was different with an empty military chest. He had a right to complain when small as was the force at his disposal, even that, owing to the negligence or inefficiency of persons at ease at home,—who, perhaps, did not sufficiently reflect on the thousand ills to which such delay gave rise,—was withheld from him; and it repeatedly happened during the war.

The Spaniards, meantime, suffering under the infliction of an

exasperated and triumphant enemy, and a conflict they were unable to support, grew clamorous for the support of the British army. About the latter end of May, Victor had withdrawn the force which took possession of Alcantara, and concentrated his army in the neighbourhood of Caceres between the Tagus and the Guadiana. The Spanish army, under General Cuesta, then advanced from its position at Llerena, and the advanced guard attacked a fortified post which the enemy still held at Merida. The attack, however, was discontinued, and Cuesta took up his head-quarters at Fuente del Maestre. General Mackenzie was in the mountains behind Castello Branco, and had been directed to occupy Alcantara in such force as to be able to secure that passage over the Tagus.

It was the end of June before the British commenced their march into Spain, along the northern banks of that river. The plan was to join the army of Cuesta on the Tietar, and with him to resume offensive operations by threatening Madrid. The amount of the Spanish troops in the south, at this period, exceeded sixty thousand; the force of Cuesta alone reached 38,000, and that of Vanegas 25,000 effective men. Before the British arrived on the frontiers they numbered 22,000 men,—presenting a striking contrast to the sullen, dissatisfied, plundering horde, which they were fast becoming under neglect and privation,—but now with head erect, and flashing eye full of animation, and eager for battle. Their commander also had just heard that a reinforcement of 8000 men had landed at Lisbon. At the lowest computation the number of French troops, prepared for the defence of Madrid, exceeded 50,000; yet it was resolved to find them employment. Not having broken up from Abrantes till the 27th of June, it was the 10th of July before all the divisions were united at Placentia. There they were joined by a regiment of cavalry, and two of infantry, from Lisbon. The army of General Cuesta lay not far off at Almaras, and Sir Arthur now proceeded to the Spanish head-quarters. During the next two days, he matured and decided on his plan of operations, which was to attack the French on the 18th, if they

continued till that time in position so as to allow the combined movement to be made. The French, under Victor, had already retired from Torremocha, and were now in position at Talavera de la Reyna. Before marching to the attack, however, the British general had to adopt precautions for preventing any sudden eruption of the corps of Soult and Ney from the side of the north into the valley of the Tagus ; he intrusted Marshal Beresford with the defence of Puerto Perales, and, by great exertions prevailed on the Spanish generals to detach forces for the occupation of Bejar and of the Puerto de Banos, and in particular for holding the pass of Perales.

It was then agreed that Vanegas should advance through La Mancha to the upper Tagus, upon Puente Duenas, and Villa Manrique to hold Sebastiani in check, and, if possible, prevent him from forming a junction with the corps of Victor. Every difficulty being surmounted the British army broke up from Placentia* on the 17th, marched upon the Tietar at the Venta de Bazagona, and on the 20th arrived at Oropesa ; there they were next day joined by the Spanish force under Cuesta ; but which, marching forwards, concentrated its remaining corps at Velada. Nearly at the same time the French general called in all his detachments and foraging parties ; then, leaving a strong rear-guard at Talavera, took up a position behind the Alberche.

Previous to these movements Sir Robert Wilson had marched from his positions, and on the 23d arrived on the same river with the Lusitanian legion and a small Spanish and Portuguese

* Sir Arthur entered Placentia on the 6th of July, and made it his headquarters. It is the capital of Estremadura ; the army was welcomed by the waving of handkerchiefs, loud huzzas, and every demonstration of joy. It still retains the old Moorish walls, and is situated on the river Xerto, over which it has two bridges ; and some of the houses are lofty and spacious. The summits of the neighbouring mountains are covered with snow, which is brought to the town in large quantities for the purpose of cooling creams, lemonade, &c. Placentia is famous for its manufacture of chocolate, and has a number of respectable shops, though their tenants were extremely cautious of opening them, the French having forgotten on leaving the place to settle their accounts.—*Journal of an Officer.*

force ; while Vanegas, having broken up from Madrileyos, succeeded in crossing the Tagus by a ford at Puente Dueñas, and reached Argand about the same time.

The allied armies advanced from Oropesa on the 22d ; and Cuesta proceeded along the high-road, until his progress was impeded by 2000 French horse under Latour Maubourg, which appeared drawn up on the table-land of Gamonal. General Zayas was likewise compelled to halt, and to make a strong demonstration of his force, which was exactly the error—and it was one frequently committed by Spanish generals—that the enemy wished him to commit. It was not till the head of the British columns appeared on his right, that Latour Maubourg moved from his position, which he then did in admirable order, supported by his infantry behind the river, although within reach of numerous batteries, and in presence of 6000 Spanish horse. It was evident, from this fact, that the enemy held the Spanish cavalry in contempt ; and that a thousand French dragoons, with such a commander at their head, would not have hesitated to attack the entire squadrons of the Spanish.* In

* When, upon the 10th of July, Sir Arthur Wellesley visited the camp of Cuesta, near the Col de Mirabete, that general drew out his forces for the inspection of the British commander. The guides, who were conducting Sir Arthur and his adjutant-general, lost their way ; and they did not arrive at the Spanish encampment till it was already dark. The troops, however, who had been four hours waiting, were still under arms with the veteran Cuesta at their head. Sir Arthur was received with a general discharge of artillery ; and a number of large torches being lighted up, he passed the entire line in review by their red and flaring blaze. In this manner he passed about 6000 cavalry, or, at least, Spanish horse. We name this only for the purpose of showing with what description of force the British were allied, and how little was to be expected from them. They were drawn up in rank entire, and not less than twenty battalions of infantry. They were all remarkably fine-looking men ; but many of them were extremely young, too young for service ; in fact, raw recruits of a boyish age. With the exception of a few battalions they were very ill appointed, not clothed in uniform ; and were in general in want of shoes. It was immediately seen from their position under arms, and from the awkwardness with which they handled their firelocks, that they were a raw undisciplined levy. There were a few corps of regularly-appointed effective soldiers, such as the Irish brigades, the

the movement from Oropesa, on the 22d, that the advanced guards attacked and drove in the enemy's outposts at Talavera. Their left was turned by the 1st hussars, and the 23d light dragoons under General Anson, and directed by Lieutenant-general Payne, and by the division of infantry commanded by General Mackenzie, and they then retired before the Spanish advanced guard, under General Zayas and the Duke de Albuquerque. The columns were then formed for the general attack of the enemy's position, but it was postponed by desire of General Cuesta till the following morning, when the different corps destined for the attack were put in motion.

The enemy had retired, however, about one in the morning to St. Olalla, and thence towards Torrijos to form a junction, as it was supposed, with General Sebastiani. Unfortunately, Sir Arthur was unable to continue the pursuit owing to the strange obstinacy of Cuesta and the great deficiency in the means of transport, there being no possibility since the arrival of the army of procuring a single mule or cart in Spain. Having

marine battalion from Cadiz, and the provisioned battalions formed out of the wreck of those brave grenadiers who had fought so well and fallen in such numbers in the early part of that fatal battle at Medellin.

To speak generally, however, the army was little better than a crowd of peasants disposed in battalions after the rule of military organization ; armed, indeed, partially like soldiers, but unacquainted with a soldier's duty. Again, their cavalry was well mounted, but very ill disciplined, ignorant of the most common movements and formations, and, with the exception of a very few corps, miserably equipped, and not fit to take the field. Such was this Spanish army ! Such in character were they all ! Seldom one so good, many greatly inferior. We are as sure as if we had been by the side of Sir Arthur, that as he rode down the Spanish line, and saw the stout Iberians in the red light of the torches which were held aloft as he passed along, and as he listened to the noisy welcomes of the cannon, and the loud confusion of sounds where battalion after battalion shouted to receive him, he was forcibly reminded of India and of all the noisy parade of those half-disciplined hosts which are formed in pompous array before the elephants of the native princes.

When, upon the 21st of July, Cuesta passed through Oropesa, Sir Arthur, in turn, drew out the British army ; and the brave old man (for with all his faults, prejudices, and obstinacy, he was brave as an aged lion) looked upon the firm battalions of the English with an admiration he could not repress.—*Sherer's Military Memoirs*, vol. i., p. 290.

vainly appealed to the adjutant-general of the Spanish army, Sir Arthur informed Cuesta that he considered the removal of the enemy from his position on the Alberche as a complete performance on his part of the engagement into which he had entered, as that operation, if advantage were duly taken of it, would give the Spanish army possession of the course of the Tagus, and would open his communication with the district of La Mancha and with General Vanegas.

He had soon still more reason to adhere to his determination to undertake no new operation, unsupported as he was, and disgusted with the treatment which his army had met with since its arrival. He was compelled to threaten that should supplies be longer refused, he would not behold his army in want of common necessaries, but instantly return into Portugal. This was attended with some effect ; and though the British army had halted, and it was impossible to support the uncertain motions of a commander, like Cuesta, yet the presence of Sir Arthur Wellesley, and a British army, continued to hold the enemy in check. But the French army having formed a junction with Sebastiani, and received a reinforcement of 8000 men, in addition to the garrison of Madrid, it was placed under the command of King Joseph, assisted by Marshals Jourdan, Victor, and General Sebastiani. It was now strong enough to resume the offensive, and on the 26th attacked the advanced guard of Cuesta, who was compelled to retire to the left bank of the Alberche, while General Sherbrooke continued at Cazalegas, and the enemy's main force at St. Olalla.

Intelligence having reached Madrid that the British were at Talavera, and that a force under Sir Robert Wilson had penetrated as far as Escalona, Joseph sent to Soult, who had assembled his army at Salamanca, directing him to march upon Placentia, a movement which had been previously fixed upon by Napoleon. Soult had himself received a private despatch from the imperial head-quarters at Ratisbon directing him to assemble the different corps, and march with an overwhelming force against the English ; and one passage in his letter shows the

importance attached by Napoleon to the one great object of expelling them from Spain, and the just opinion he had formed of the plan likely to be adopted by the British general. "Wellesley," he wrote, "will probably advance by the Tagus against Madrid: —in that case pass the mountains, fall upon his flank and rear, and crush him;" evidently giving Sir Arthur credit by using the word *probably*, for adopting the best line of march, of which he was well aware, and which, under the same circumstances, it is pretty clear by this suggestion that he would himself in all *probability* have adopted.

Accordingly when Soult heard of the advance of the British to Placentia, he informed Ney that he might advance upon Zamora while he prepared to lay siege to Ciudad Rodrigo, being now convinced that Sir Arthur intended to proceed by the line of the Tagus. He first drove the Duque del Parque upon that city, when he immediately became acquainted with Sir Arthur's arrival at Placentia. He lost no time in directing the march of Mortier upon Salamanca, and was soon at the head of 50,000 men prepared to follow up the imperial orders to "outflank and crush the English," while Sir Arthur was engaged in passing the Tietar.

Simultaneously with the advance of Soult upon Placentia, King Joseph had left Madrid with the reserve to join the army of Victor and Sebastiani, leaving 3000 men to watch Vanegas, and marched with his remaining force on the same destination. Thus the combined forces, behind the river Guadarama, amounted, by the 26th of July, to nearly 50,000 men with ninety pieces of artillery. Victor having retired before the British behind the Alberche, Cuesta, no longer to be restrained by the earnest advice of the English commander, had the imprudence to pursue him, and, but for the generous interposition of him whose council he had just spurned, would have fallen an easy prey to the enemy. He despatched General Sherbrooke, as we have seen, with nearly all the cavalry and two divisions of infantry, to cross the river and direct his march to Cazalegas. Here he could hold the enemy in check and protect the retreat of the

Spaniards, while he opened communications with the force under Sir Robert Wilson at Escalona. It turned out exactly as Sir Arthur had anticipated ; on the 26th, when Cuesta was compelled to retreat, the French cavalry passed the Guadarama, drove the Spaniards from Torrijos ; and it was then that the precautions of the British general rescued the Spanish army from destruction.

It was evident, at the same time, that the French were prepared to make a general attack upon the British, for which the best position appeared to be in the neighbourhood of Talavera. Cuesta having just escaped by the superior prudence of his ally, was no longer eager to snatch the victory out of his hands, but quickly took up the position allotted him ; General Sherbrooke retired with his corps to its station in the line, and General Mackenzie occupied an advanced post in the wood on the right of the Alberche, which covered the left flank of the British. The position taken up by the troops extended more than two miles ; the ground was open on the left, and it was commanded by a height on which was placed in *échelon* as the second line, a division of infantry under the orders of Major-general Hill. Between this height and a range of mountains farther on the left, was a valley commanded by the same height, and not at first occupied, and the range of hills appeared too distant to have any influence on the expected action.

The right, occupied by Spanish troops, extended in front of the town of Talavera, down to the Tagus. This part of the ground was covered with olive-trees, and intersected by banks and ditches. The high-road, leading from the bridge over the Alberche, was defended by a heavy battery in front of a church, occupied by Spanish infantry. All the avenues to the town were defended in a similar manner ; the town itself was occupied, and the remainder of the Spanish infantry was formed in two lines behind the banks, on the road which led from the town, and the right to the left of the British position. In the centre, between the two armies, was a commanding spot of ground, on which the English had begun to construct a redoubt,

with some open ground in the rear. Here General Campbell was posted with a division, supported in his rear by General Cotton's brigade of dragoons, with some Spanish cavalry. The enemy now appeared in force on the left bank of the Alberche, and about three in the afternoon came through the wood so suddenly, before the division of Mackenzie could be withdrawn, as to cause some confusion and loss. But, though charged with such impetuosity by the hostile columns, and even separated, they formed again, and retreated in admirable order. The steadiness and discipline of the troops, and the distinguished gallantry of some regiments under circumstances so trying, were particularly noticed by Sir Arthur, who bestowed no less praise on the skilful manner in which their commander, who fell in the hottest of that day's fight, drew off his division. Soon the enemy's columns appeared in large masses on the right of the river, determined on making a vigorous attack on the combined armies. The division of Mackenzie continued to fall back upon the left of the British position, where he was placed in the second line in the rear of the guards; Colonel Donkin being placed in the same situation, farther upon the left in the rear of the German legion. The enemy now commenced their general attack, though in the dusk of the evening, with great spirit and determination. A heavy cannonade opened upon the left of the allied position; and there was a partial action along the whole front of the line. A brisk attack was also made on the Spanish infantry posted on the right; but it wholly failed. Early in the night, a division was pushed along the valley, on the left of the height occupied by General Hill, of which it gained momentary possession; but that gallant leader instantly attacked with the bayonet, and regained it. The loss, both of officers and men, in the defence of this important point, was very considerable; and early in the battle, in the affair at the Casa de Salinas, Sir Arthur Wellesley himself had a narrow escape of being made prisoner. The French light cavalry having made an attack on the Spanish position, a body of 5000, seized with a sudden panic, fled, after

discharging some volleys of musketry, and were with difficulty rallied. Still the French pressed on, bent on carrying the height on the left—the very key of the position—and held, at this time, by the brigade of Colonel Donkin. He repulsed them in front; but, being too weak to defend all points, the enemy succeeded in turning his left, and crowning the hill in his rear. At this moment General Hill was moving up to his relief, and was fired at from the summit, when, supposing that the shots were from some British stragglers, who mistook the direction of their fire, he rode up attended by his brigade-major, Fordyce, to put them right. Both instantly found themselves surrounded; the major was killed on the spot; a French grenadier was in the act of seizing the bridle of the general's horse, when, spurring hard, he succeeded in breaking away, and, soon after, meeting a party of the 29th, he turned round, led them with undaunted courage to the charge, and retook the summit at the point of the bayonet. But a heavy mass of infantry again advanced, and a daring attack, still more formidable, was repeated, although night had set in. The fire was terrific: never had the French evinced a valour more persevering; and the volleys were discharged so close, that the men could perceive, by the sudden flashes bursting through the darkness, the formation, and even the features of their enemies. After a deadly volley, the British again rushed on with the bayonet, and swept the entire column down the acclivity. The battle gradually subsided as the night advanced, and the two armies continued in their positions. The British troops lay upon their arms the whole of that anxious night, in which frequent alarms, shouts of the sentinels, the neighing of steeds, and random volleys, heard most from the Spanish positions, gave little interval even for a soldier's repose.

Scarcely had the day dawned, before the enemy made dispositions for a new assault. They began by opening a terrific fire from the opposite heights, which not only bore on the point of attack, but on the whole British line. Under this, two strong columns were seen advancing against the British left. In con-

sequence of these repeated attempts upon the height on the left, Sir Arthur had placed two brigades of British cavalry in the valley, supported in the rear by the Duc d'Albuquerque's division of Spanish horse. Still the columns pressed rapidly on, ascended the steep acclivities with astonishing boldness, rushed within a few paces of the summit, and then, with close volleys, maintained a gallant fight. But the British, under General Hill, never wavered ; they repulsed charge after charge, till the enemy retired, leaving the ground heaped with their slain. The loss of the British was also great ; and General Hill was severely wounded in this fatal strife. There was now a pause :—for some hours the enemy made no fresh movement ; and, as if by common consent, the armies on both sides, like wearied reapers, breathed from the harvest of death,—yet with undaunted heart and fixed look, ready to resume the work before them, when once refreshed. The wounded were now removed to the rear, but there was little interval for food or rest ; and it is a singular fact, that, eager to slake their thirst, the soldiers nearest each other, from both armies, ran to drink at a small brook which lay between them, and, like friends and brothers, greeted each other with that frank respect, which is always felt for those who most resemble them, by the truly brave.

It was about noon when the French again stood to their arms. Their fine cavalry appeared mounted, and the troops in their different positions were all in motion. The new dispositions made by the French generals occupied but little time, and before two o'clock the columns of attack prepared to bear down with all their weight upon the British. Eighty pieces of artillery opened their terrific thunder, and for some moments caused fearful chasms, but which were as speedily filled up along the whole line. Covered by fiery clouds and darkness, four close columns, with a press of skirmishers, once more bore down to join the battle. One fell on the division of General Campbell, which supported the Spanish left. It approached close to the English before it received a single shot, volleys of which were

then followed by the sudden and fatal charge. The foe recoiled and fled ; a battery of ten guns was seized ; and the Spanish battalions, with great spirit, assisted in repelling this powerful attack. The British right was so far victorious : upon the left, a French division, supported by cavalry, advanced up the valley to turn the hill, while another was marching to occupy the mountain. Sir Arthur had already provided for both ; and he now sent orders for General Anson's brigade to charge the French infantry ; but, coming to the brink of a ravine, the formation of the squadrons was broken, and numbers, in full career, plunged down into it, receiving the tremendous fire of the French, and falling over each other ; yet, those who escaped rallied under Major Ponsonby, and held boldly on. So great were the efforts made, both by foot and horse, in defence of this important position on the left, that at length the French gave up the attempt.

During this long doubtful contest here, the hill had been repeatedly attacked in front, but with the like success. It was different with the attack on the centre, in which the enemy obtained some partial success. The guards, in repelling them, advanced too far ; the enemy wheeled about, and pressing their flank, drove them back with loss ; while the German legion was little less roughly handled. From the hill on the left, Sir Arthur saw the error committed by the guards, and ordered the 48th regiment to their support, perceiving which, the guards and Germans rallied in noble style. A brigade of horse, also, from the second line, came up to their support ; while the artillery played upon the enemy's flanks.

The French appeared, at length, to have exhausted their strength ; the vigour of their attack diminished till they began to draw off on all sides, without having made the desired impression on the British line. Their retreat, however, owing to their excellent cavalry and superior numbers, was conducted in perfect order : by six the firing ceased ; and once more, these two noble armies reposed upon the same ground they had possessed in the morning. During the 29th, the 30th, and 31st, the

enemy drew off and then disappeared ; from which circumstance, and that of the successful repulse of every attack, the sanguinary and long-contested battle of Talavera may fairly be said to have been won by the British. Still, they had to deplore a fearful loss, not less than 6000, including those who fell on the previous days. That of the French, however, was computed at not less than 10,000, though French historians of the war say much under that amount : they left seventeen guns ; and were defeated in the object of expelling the English from Spain, much more of crushing them, as commanded by their imperial master, who, in fact, conducted the French campaign in Spain, by his astonishing knowledge of all that ought to be done, even while engaged on the plains of Germany.

In every point of view the battle of Talavera was most important, as regarded the success of the cause both in Spain and Portugal. By drawing on the British the whole brunt of the war, it saved the Spanish army on the frontiers, and gave time for the patriot troops, in all directions, to rally and increase their strength, while, by the splendid example of skill and valour it held forth, in repelling twice the numbers of the veteran soldiers of France, it spread confidence and respect for discipline amongst the Spanish forces, which had full leisure to observe and admire it. Nor was this all : by so severe a blow, it paralyzed, for a time, the exertions of the French ; and, while it prolonged the contest, saved Portugal from the calamities of a second devastating invasion.

On the other hand, there are many circumstances connected with this battle, which show that it was compulsory, sustained at a fearful sacrifice, and would never have been fought, could Sir Arthur Wellesley, whose gallantry was always directed by prudence, by possibility have avoided it. The vast superiority in numbers on the side of the French, proves that it would have been an act of wilful folly, such as a general, like Wellington, was the least capable of committing, to say nothing of the unfavourable circumstances under which it was fought. The tremendous slaughter, and the scenes of horror by which,

throughout, and afterwards, it was attended, evince the unexampled efforts made by the British—efforts which, directed by all the genius and resources of their admirable leader, barely enabled them to retain possession of their ground. It was fought from necessity; and the struggle was one, not for victory, but for existence — for no British army can exist under defeat. Every previous and subsequent fact, relating to the expedition against Victor, the opinion of Soult, and the words of the British hero himself, demonstrate the correctness of this view, so opposite to that taken by most writers; and that, with reference to itself, the march into Spain, and the projected attack,—still more the surprise and discomfiture of Victor—was a lamentable failure. Sir Arthur was disappointed in all his calculations;—of his coming up with Victor—of the co-operation of the Spanish army, which, when in the field with him, he dared not trust,—and of following the French along the Tagus, and threatening Madrid. But he did all that a great general could do to bring his army out of difficulties, in which the faults of others, and events he could in no way control, had placed them. When he found the impracticable character of Cuesta, the rapid concentration of the French troops, the extreme privations to which his army was subjected, he determined to retreat; but the egregious error committed by Cuesta, in pursuing the French, who retired behind the Alberche, delayed the departure of the British, and brought on a general battle, under such fearful odds, to rescue the Spaniards from destruction. Like the ass in the lion's skin, the obstinate old chief, when Sir Arthur was at hand, supposed that the French were retreating before *him*, and followed, as he believed, to destroy them. When committed, beyond redemption, by his own presumption, and when destruction or surrender stared him in the face, and not till then, he became more reasonable, and on being saved, took up the position assigned him. Sir Arthur himself assures us that the French had accurate knowledge of all his movements; and that Soult declared that, although the English were covered with glory, if they had remained two

days longer, they must all have been prisoners: and he adds, with his accustomed frank and manly spirit—"And I am afraid we must, or all have been destroyed."* This is conclusive, without requiring the confirmation of his subsequent retreat.

* Despatches, Badajos, 18th September, 1809.

CHAPTER VIII.

(1809 to 1814.)

Particulars of the battle—Singular facts—Rare ability and decision of Sir A. Wellesley—Talents for business—Promptness and despatch—Sir R. Wilson and the Portuguese—Loss of an important pass—Policy of the British general—Concentration of the French forces—Admirable measures of the English general—Excellent views of Spanish affairs—Good advice—Sufferings of the army—Spirited remonstrances—Continued retreat—Analogous circumstances—Views of government—Opposition at home—Strictures on the Spanish system—New operations—Indefatigable efforts—Wonderful activity—Positions of the army—State of the Spanish armies—Sir A. Wellesley's attempts to save them—Appeals to the generals and to the juntas—Destruction of successive armies.

THE battle of Talavera de la Reyna was justly characterized by the conqueror as “a most desperate one ;” that it was won with fearful odds, almost two to one against the British, is a singular and memorable fact ; and one, except for the reasons already given, more honourable to the gallantry than to the judgment of their distinguished leader. The advance of the guards in repelling an attack, to the extent to which it was carried had nearly proved fatal, and the battle was certainly saved only by the steady conduct of the 48th regiment, upon which General Sherbrooke’s division formed again. The ground in front of the Spanish troops was not unfavourable to an attack upon the enemy’s flank, while engaged with the English ; there were broad roads leading from Talavera and different points in their position, in a direct line to the front, as well as diagonally to the left ; but they were not in a state of discipline to attempt it, and if they had got into confusion all would have been lost. The few, however, who were engaged behaved well, though the Spaniards were chiefly spectators of the combat, the entire weight of which fell upon their allies. The French, repulsed

at all points, retired during the night, but took up positions which still threatened those of the allies to whom retreat became more necessary than to the very superior numbers of the enemy.

While still at Talavera on the 29th July, Sir Arthur was joined by a reinforcement of 3000 men, which in some measure replaced the heavy loss he had sustained in men, for that of officers was irreparable. Another painful subject that occupied his attention at this period, was the deficiency of funds, and the consequent embarrassment with regard to his own movements, and the prospect of a favourable termination of the campaign. "The demands of the Portuguese upon our funds," he wrote,* "are so very large, as well on account of debt as of subsidy, that I do not know how to answer them; but I will see what can be done in respect to this debt on bills. I wish that you would give government a hint privately that they have embarked on too wide a scale, and that the funds which they have provided cannot supply us and the Portuguese subsidy, and Sir John Moore's old debts in Portugal and Spain."

In his subsequent despatches, Sir Arthur Wellesley, whom no pressure of business ever prevented from discharging the duties of a superior officer, spoke in high terms of the conduct of some of the officers to whose gallantry, when the commanders were killed or wounded, he owed the preservation of his army. In particular he recommended to the notice of the commander-in-chief; or rather in his own words, to his particular protection, Major Middlemore, who led on the first battalion of the 48th after Colonel Donellan was struck down; and by his gallant advance, so much promoted the final success of the action, by enabling General Sherbrooke's division to form again. And as in other cases, whenever with truth he could speak with commendation, he did it heartily and with effect; "and if his conduct," he concluded, "did not then, I would

* Talavera, 29th of July. To the Right Hon. J. Villiers.

almost say demand promotion, his uniform good conduct and attention to his duty would do so."*

The next object of General Wellesley, after completing his arrangements for the removal of the sick and wounded, and retiring into Portugal, was to communicate with Marshal Beresford, whose position now became of more importance to him than ever. Though the result of the battles of the 27th and 28th showed that the enemy had nothing to hope from a general action, it was quite evident they would endeavour to act on his communications with Portugal; and they were now engaged in rapidly reorganizing troops to the northward. Sir Arthur was therefore extremely solicitous that a good communication should be kept up between Marshal Beresford and Romana on the eastern frontier, no less for their own security than for that of his left, of Ciudad Rodrigo, and of Portugal itself. This once settled, it was his intention to renew his operations on the side of Spain, as he clearly saw that the French would never venture through the passes into Estremadura with the British on one side of him, and Beresford and Romana on the other, in which position Portugal presented to them only a *cul de sac*.

Such a co-operation between these two leaders, he considered highly important to the general cause; for in proportion as their armies became more disciplined, they would aid in driving the enemy to the north. This being accomplished, came the more arduous task of prevailing on the self-willed Cuesta to follow them, particularly if they should have detached a corps to oppose Vanegas, whom he supposed to be at Toledo, whither Sir Arthur, after refreshing his army, had at first intended to join him, so as to threaten Madrid, if not interrupted by some accident on his flank.

In case that a good understanding were not established with Romana, with a view to the common cause, Beresford was enjoined to look to his own security and that of Portugal, while

* To Lieut. Col. Gordon, Military Secretary, Talavera, July 29.

Sir Arthur himself, compelled to consider the preservation of the British army as his first duty, must look for safety by turning round, attacking the army which menaced his flank, and leaving Cuesta to his own fate. He recommended at the same time the occupation of a position that would prevent the enemy attacking the Puerto de Banos with a large force, as most useful to his own operations.

Exactly as Sir Arthur had divined, the enemy threatened the pass of the Puerto, leading to Placentia, with a view of cutting off his communications with Portugal. On his first arrival he had prevailed upon Cuesta to place there a small force under the Marquis de la Reyna ; and desired Beresford to collect the Portuguese on the frontier, so as to protect Ciudad Rodrigo and all Portugal, while he prevented the enemy passing the mountains, and at the same time protected the left flank of the British. But Beresford had only 15,000 men, ill equipped, and worse disciplined, while the enemy had on the Douro and in the vicinity, not less than 20,000 effective troops ; the remains of veteran corps belonging to Soult, Ney, and Kellermann. Next to that of the British army, General Wellesley considered it his duty to consult the safety of Portugal, and would do nothing he deemed inconsistent with that object. Should he find his communication with Portugal therefore in danger, he must necessarily abandon the general cause, and study only his own safety and that of our oldest ally. At the same time he left no means untried to secure the advantages he saw, before it was too late ; he recommended the central junta to order the Marquis de la Romana, near Formeselle at the junction of the Formes and the Duero, to join the Duque del Parque, with 25,000 men, and to open communications with Marshal Beresford ; he warmly urged the government to reinforce these combined armies with cavalry, not under 4000, so that by giving a formidable character to the defence of Portugal, the Portuguese and Spanish would be accustomed to act in concert both with the British and each other,—gradually attain the discipline required, till enabled to resume the offensive,

and direct their combined strength to the benefit of the general cause.

Still anxious for the security of this important pass, while his army reposed a brief interval after their long and heroic efforts, Sir Arthur, on the 31st, renewed his remonstrances with Cuesta, to detach, without delay, a division of his infantry with guns and a commanding officer, on whose abilities he could rely to reinforce that essential position. He frankly declared that he never would have advanced so far if he had not had reason to believe that that point was secure; and he still thought that the movements of General Beresford, with the Portuguese army on the frontier, or that of the Duque del Parque from Ciudad Rodrigo, combined with the natural difficulties of the country, and the defence by the Marquis de la Reyna, might delay the enemy's advance till the arrival of this division. At all events, that division would be in a situation to observe the enemy, if he should have crossed the mountains before its arrival; but if in time it would perform a service important to the common cause, and preclude the necessity which Sir Arthur felt of taking other measures, and abandoning his positions to re-establish his communication with Portugal, to the detriment of all his plans in operating against the great body of the enemy.

It was of equal importance to Cuesta to prevent the irruption of the French into Placentia, which would immediately enable them to interrupt the aged chief's communication with Seville by the bridge of Almaraz. But the difficulty was to induce him to move when required, and to restrain him when he ought to remain quiet, although Sir Arthur, on more than one occasion, sought to conciliate him by the most flattering attentions and even entreaties, insomuch that the vain old man was heard to declare "that he had not relented, till the proud Englishman went down upon his knees." On the 31st, Sir Arthur received intelligence that the enemy were in the villages on the other side of the Alberche, which, together with the threatened advance of the enemy through the Puerto de Banos, would render the situation of both armies extremely critical. With that

foresight and promptness for which he was so remarkable, he now urged the advance of General Vanegas towards Madrid, by a line as distant as possible from that adopted by the combined armies, with a view of acting as a diversion in favour of the latter. The enemy having to detach his main body to protect the capital, would leave the force opposed to the British so much weakened as to enable Sir Arthur to attack without disadvantage, or to detach a sufficient corps to engage the army supposed to be advancing through the mountains of Placentia.

While thus actively engaged in providing for the security, not only of the British army but for those of Spain and Portugal, and the success of the common cause, this able and indefatigable commander was continually harrassed by the vexatious proceedings of the Spanish junta, its ministers, and agents, who—to say nothing of the generals—seemed bent on misrepresenting all his actions, and insinuating the most unfounded charges. He long treated them with the contempt they deserved; but, finding that the idle clamour they raised was likely to prove injurious to the success of the campaign, no less than to his own reputation, he, at length, indignantly repelled them, and addressed a letter, couched in the language of an upright and injured man, to one of the British agents in communication with the Spanish authorities.*

It is at once so characteristic of the writer's mind, and so important with regard to the cause which he had embraced, that it would be injustice not to give it in his own words.

“ SIR,

“ I have the honour to enclose the copy of a letter which I have received from Don Martin de Garay, upon which I request of you to convey to him the following observations:—

“ I shall be very much obliged to him if he will understand that I have no authority—nay, that I have been directed not to correspond with any of the Spanish ministers, and I request

* To the Right Hon. J. H. Frere, Talavera, July, 1809.

that he will in future convey to me, through you, the commands which he may have for me. I am convinced that I shall then avoid the injurious and uncandid misrepresentations of what passes, which Don Martin de Garay has more than once sent to me, apparently with a view of placing on the records of his government, statements of my actions and conduct which are entirely inconsistent with the truth, and to which statements I have no regular means of replying.

“As soon as my march into Spain was determined upon, which you and Don Martin de Garay are aware was not till a very late period, I sent to procure means of transport and other supplies at the places in which I considered it most likely I should get them,—namely Placentia, Ciudad Rodrigo, Gata, Bejar, &c.—and, as soon as I found that I had failed, I wrote to General O’Donoju, on the 16th of July, a letter, of which you have, and of which I know the government have, a copy; in which I told him that, as I had not received the assistance I required, I could undertake for no more than the first operation, which I had settled with General Cuesta in my interview with him on the 11th. It is, therefore, an unfounded opinion that the first account that the government received of my intentions, not to undertake any new operations, was when they heard that I had left General Cuesta alone to pursue the enemy.

“The statement is not true; for, although I disapproved of General Cuesta’s advance of the 24th and 25th, which I knew would end as it did, I did support it with two divisions of infantry and a brigade of cavalry, which covered his retreat to the Alberche on the 26th, and his passage of that river on the 27th; and, supposing the assertion to have been true, and that General Cuesta was exposed to be attacked by the enemy when alone, it was his fault and not mine, and I had given him fair notice, not only by my letter of the 16th of July, but frequently afterwards, that I could do no more.

“It is not a difficult matter for a gentleman in the situation of Don Martin de Garay, to sit down in his cabinet and write his ideas of glory, which would result from driving the French

through the Pyrenees ; and, I believe, there is no man in Spain who has risked so much, or who has sacrificed so much, to effect that object as I have.

“ But I wish that Don Martin de Garay, or the gentlemen of the junta, before they blame me for not doing more, or impute to me beforehand the probable consequences of the blunders or the indiscretion of others, would either come or send here somebody to satisfy the wants of our half-starved army ; which, although they have been engaged for two days, and have defeated twice their numbers, in the service of Spain, have not bread to eat. It is positively a fact, that, during the last seven days, the British army have not received one third of their provisions ; that, at this moment, there are nearly four thousand soldiers dying in the hospital in this town from want of common assistance and necessaries, *which any other country in the world would have given, even to its enemies*, and that I can get no assistance of any description from that country. I cannot prevail upon them even to bury the dead carcasses in the neighbourhood, the stench of which will destroy themselves as well as us.

“ I cannot avoid feeling these circumstances ; and the junta must see, that, unless they and the country make a great exertion to support and supply the armies, to which the invariable attention and the exertion of every man, and the labour of every beast, in the country ought to be directed, the bravery of the soldiers, their losses and their success, will only make matters worse, and increase our embarrassment and distress. I positively will not move ; nay, more, I will disperse my army, till I am supplied with provisions and means of transport as I ought to be.”

It was not till he had recourse to expostulations, and even threats like these, that Sir Arthur could induce the Spanish authorities to perform their obligations, or even the common duties of humanity towards their heroic liberators. Nor did he now receive any immediate benefit from his most strenuous efforts to persuade them to act with common prudence and reason, either in supporting his own army or with reference to

their own safety and that of their country. He was equally unsuccessful in prevailing upon Cuesta to detach a sufficient force to secure the pass of Puerto de Banos ; and, although 12,000 French were on their road from Alba de Tormes towards Bejar, threatening the rear of the British, the extreme fatigue of the troops, the want of provisions, and the number of wounded to be taken care of, still prevented them moving from their positions. Meantime, General Vanegas arrived upon the Tagus during the 28th and the 29th, and proceeded to attack Toledo with a detachment under Brigadier-general Lacy, subsequently moving upon the bridge of Aranjuez. The enemy then withdrew their rear-guard, which was posted on the heights on the left of the Alberche, at 11 o'clock on the night of the 31st, and the whole army marched towards St. Olalla, a movement which showed the sound judgment formed by Sir Arthur with regard to the effect of Vanegas's advance. The French took up a position near the Guadarama, so as to be able to throw their whole force upon Vanegas or upon the British army, should it protect the movement upon the capital. Sir Arthur's situation, owing to the extreme privations to which his army was exposed, now became one of much embarrassment ; but, with his usual sanguine temper, he still hoped to surmount all difficulties without the necessity of engaging in another battle so desperate as that he had just won. He declared that he could get the better of every thing if he only knew how to manage General Cuesta, but that his temper and disposition were so bad, he found him wholly impracticable.

Had it not been for the arrival, about this period, of assistance from England, it is impossible to estimate the consequences to Great Britain and her interests, by reliance upon Spanish faith, and the promises of Spanish juntas. Comparatively useless and ill-disciplined as they were, their armies were so numerous that they consumed every thing before them ; they had no magazines, those of the British had long disappeared, and, as their indomitable commander emphatically expressed it, "there was a scramble for every thing." England and its army,

in truth, was the sole beacon left to save Spain, and Europe itself, from the storm that threatened them.

The success attending the first movements of Vanegas,—as recommended by Sir Arthur,—made him anxious that the system should be still pursued, and the army kept in a state of alarm for the safety of the capital, and compelled to divide their forces, so as to divert them from the side of Portugal and maintain the security of the British rear. By this admirable manœuvre, indeed, the British were freed from all serious alarm; it rendered Soult unable to cope with them,—it deprived Victor of his main support, by withdrawing Sebastiani and the king, engaged in watching the capital,—and left Sir Arthur more than a match for any single force that could be brought against him. On the 3d of August, he received intelligence that the enemy were coming into Navalmoral, and that every thing was prepared for destroying the bridge of Almaraz on the appearance of the enemy. As he clearly saw that it would not be pleasant to fight a general action with the whole French army, with the river at his back and no means of passing it, and, as he could not engage where he was without holding Calera, which appeared to be impracticable, he recommended that the whole army should assemble on that side the bridge of Arzobispo. He, at the same time, wrote to General Bassecourt, enjoining him to set out immediately to join him, or, at all events, to reach La Calzada. By the 3d of August, Sir Arthur had retreated upon Oropesa, whence he sent notice to Marshal Beresford that, as the movement of Soult through the Puerto de Baños had deranged all his plans and compelled him to return to drive him out, he could not only assist in effecting that object, but, probably, in cutting off the retreat entirely.

Soult had arrived at Placentia on the 1st of August, and it was the intention of the British commander to proceed by Navalmoral as speedily as possible, with a view of overtaking and giving him battle by the 6th or 7th, if he still continued at Placentia. He wrote to Marshal Beresford to occupy Baños and Perales without loss of time, and, in particular, a point not

far from Placentia, between the two passes which effectually commands the road from Placentia, and by which he might cut off the enemy's retreat. While thus actively resuming the campaign, he was surprised by the intelligence that both Ney and Victor were preparing to unite their forces with those of Soult; that it would be necessary for the Spaniards to retire across the bridge of Almaraz, and that, in that event, with Ney and Soult before him, and Victor and probably the king behind him, he should not be enabled to continue his march upon Placentia. Should Soult, however, be alone and unsupported, he enjoined Beresford to occupy the positions behind him, which he had already pointed out; but, in case he should be in superior force, to proceed with his army to Castello Branco, and defend the passes.

These prompt and able measures, in the embarrassing position in which he found himself by the gross neglect and errors of others, evince a mind confident in its own strength and resources in the hour of danger. Notwithstanding the anxiety he had felt, the pains he had taken, and the assurances he had received respecting the security of the pass of Baños, he had the mortification to learn that the French corps which threatened that point had passed through unopposed. When the evil was done, Cuesta trembling for his own safety, and sensible of the important advantage gained by the enemy, hastened to Sir Arthur to propose that half of the army should march immediately to set the matter right again. Sir Arthur coolly answered, that if by half of the army he meant half of the Spanish and half of the English corps he would not consent to the proposal; but that he would either stay or go with his own army. The old Spaniard then desired that he would make a choice, and the British general offered to set out. He well knew that by this resolution he should not only prevent the Spanish army from again being compromised and affording a fresh triumph to the enemy, but that he could effect the operation with more certainty and less time; he could bring to bear upon the same point all the Spanish troops in the vicinity, the

Portuguese army, now assembled not far from Ciudad Rodrigo, besides the Guerrilla legion, under Sir Robert Wilson.

That spirited and active leader had again appeared with his force near Escalona, and engaged the attention of the enemy, who, might thus perhaps not receive intelligence of Sir Arthur's movements till he was on his return. Judging from the advance upon Escalona, and from the head quarters of Victor, at Maqueda, that it was his intention to re-enter Estremadura in that direction, despairing of success on the side of Talavera, General Wellesley saw clearly that he aimed at turning his supposed position at that place, while he supported Soult, who, he concluded, would endeavour to advance by the Tietar. But in the event of the enemy becoming aware of his early movements, and threatening to fall upon Cuesta in full force, that general was *recommended*, for there was no hope of *directing* him, to retire as fast as he well could upon the British.

During all these movements the army was fearfully distressed for provisions. The soldiers had seldom bread enough to eat, that half mouldy, and delivered to them at hours when they ought to have been taking repose. The appearance of affairs had altogether changed for the worse. By the 4th General Wellesley had reached the Puente del Arzobispo, where he received General Cuesta's congratulations on his appointment to the rank of Generalissimo of the Spanish armies, and in returning the compliment Sir Arthur begged to congratulate his excellency upon the honour conferred upon *him*; adding at the same time that not having found any good position on the right of the Tagus, and having heard that he had ordered the Spanish army to pass the river, he had likewise taken measures for the British to pass. Should the Spaniards be attacked before they could decide on their ulterior dispositions, it would not make half an hour's difference,—and he particularly wished that General Cuesta would carry into execution the plan agreed upon that morning, and fall back upon the Tagus.

The British position at Oropesa being insecure and liable to be cut off, by Calera, its sole point of retreat, Sir Arthur only

remained to refresh his troops, and proceeded on towards Mesa de Ibor. The report of the French army having been reinforced to the amount of 30,000 men, here confirmed him in his resolution to act at present on the defensive; he saw the necessity of a diversion being made in favour of the British and Spanish in this quarter, by the movement of another force in the direction of Madrid, until which time it was impossible to resume the offensive. In order also to render offensive operations successful, it was requisite that the marches to be made should be long, and made with celerity. The British were then unequal to the task; and it is more than probable that Victor would have been upon them, before they could have settled the affair with Soult. The measures adopted therefore by General Wellesley under these trying circumstances were the most prudent, and promised to lead to the best if not the most brilliant result. While thus laudably active in averting the evil consequences caused by the rashness and inefficiency of the Spaniards, this persevering commander was continually importuned by the vain old Spaniard to fight general actions, to whose arguments he pithily replied, "that now that Castile was freed from the French, Romana, and the Duque del Parque ought to be directed to make some demonstrations towards Madrid which would relieve their armies;" and the British general retired behind the Tagus.

Having taken up the line of this river, it became the general's next object, as soon as possible, to secure the passage of Almaraz. Soult arrived the same day* at Navalmoral, and had taken possession of the road to the bridge, which if not taken up, the enemy might have destroyed it. Ney was at no great distance,—if not along with the army of Soult, and another battle was inevitable if the British were to become masters of the road to Almaraz.

Cuesta having also left Talavera, the bridge of Arzobispo was equally open to the enemy, and if he had destroyed it, and the combined army failed in forcing the position of Soult, all had

* August 6th.

been lost. The pass of Baños having once been forced, it was evident that the allies had nothing left but to take care of themselves and act on the defensive ; the grand error was committed of leaving open to the enemy, after they had been forced out,—the gate from Spain into Portugal. Although Cuesta refused to despatch a force sufficient to defend it, it may be asked, if under all circumstances, the British commander evinced his usual caution in not detaching some officer of experience and ability at the head of a small body to reinforce the Portuguese ; or might he not have intrusted the entire command of so important a point to a man of dashing spirit and enterprise, like Sir Robert Wilson ?

The truth is that on quitting Portugal, and some time after, the necessity of retreat and guarding the passes, though considered by Sir Arthur Wellesley, was considered only as a possibility—not a matter of the first importance ; or the Puerto de Baños would never have been crossed by the French without more opposition. The superiority in point of positions obtained by the enemy after the battle of Talavera, mainly arose from this cause ; Portugal was again entered and threatened, and had the same superiority attached to the French troops as to their positions, perilous indeed would have been the situation of the British army. The subsequent movements show the correctness of this opinion, and that had the communication of the combined armies with Portugal been perfectly maintained, the extreme sufferings of the British, and the failure of the intended demonstrations against Madrid would both in a great measure, have been avoided.

Sir Arthur was at Mesa de Ibor on the 6th, and proposed to take up the position of Almaraz, give his troops some rest and food, and see what the enemy would do. His opinion was that they would persevere in their invasion of Portugal, in order to draw the allies from Spain ; and again he besought Marshal Beresford to put himself in a situation to defend the passes.

The desertion of the Portuguese, however, was alarming, and in consequence of the decision of the commander-in-chief in

England, all the English officers, in a body, quitted the Portuguese service.

The retreat—for such it was—continued on the 7th, when Sir Arthur reached Deleytosa; the advanced guard was upon the Tagus, opposite Almaraz; engineers were busily engaged in examining the river with a view to its defences, to arm batteries, and to replace the bridge. He recommended Cuesta to send the greatest part of his artillery through the mountains; and to have a division of infantry stationed at Mesa de Ibor, if only with the object of keeping up the communication between the two armies. It was, moreover, a strong post, and in the event of any accident to the Spaniards, would effectually secure a retreat. The British continued at Deleytosa on the 8th; whence Sir Arthur addressed a letter to the Duke of Richmond, a passage from which shows the importance he attached to the position of the Puerto so unfortunately lost.* “We were in a bad scrape, from which, I think, I have extricated both armies; and I really believe that, if I had not determined to retire at the moment I did, all retreat would have been cut off for both.”

Still retiring, on the 21st Sir Arthur was at Truxillo, where he again wrote, “Starvation has produced such dire effects upon the army; we have suffered so much, and have received so little assistance from the Spaniards, that I am at last compelled to move back into Portugal to look for subsistence. There is no enemy in our front of any consequence; Ney is gone back into Castile, Soult is at Placentia, Mortier at Oropesa, Arzobispo, and Navalmoral; Victor’s corps is divided, being half of it at Talavera, and half in La Mancha with Sebastiani. They cannot say we were compelled to go therefore by the enemy, but by a necessity created by the neglect of the Spaniards of our wants.”

In the midst of the anxieties and sufferings thus caused by the want of energy and prudence in others, and by having placed some confidence in the support of the Spanish army and people; which, as in the loss of the Puerto, had failed him in

* To his Grace the Duke of Richmond; Deleytosa, 8th Aug., 1809.

the hour of danger, this great man still preserved the same noble patience, equanimity, and perseverance. With a temper unruffled he maintained his usual buoyancy, was equally attentive to the least duties of his high station, and even to those personal acts of kindness, those little courtesies and attentions for which, while oppressed with a mass of business, he always contrived to find time, in addition to an extensive correspondence. It forms a pleasing contrast to the stern picture of such a war—with all its train of cares, responsibilities, and thousand causes of suffering and sorrow—to find him engaged in executing the commissions or wishes of his friends at home, writing to congratulate them on the safety, the good conduct, the promotion of their young and brave relatives serving with him ; his care and attention to their interests were unremitting, and their health and happiness were promoted by every possible means. “Lord Edward,” he again writes,* “had been unwell for some time : he has been living with me, and is now much better. He has had the common dysentery, aggravated by a slight fit of the gout. The latter has gone, and the former is getting better every day. Pray remember me kindly to the duchess, and Lady Edward, and all the children.”

Again, immediately after the battle, he lost no time in writing to his friends in England : “Your nephew,” he observed to the duke, “is safe. His horse was shot under him on the 27th, Almost all my staff are either hit or have lost their horses ; and how I have escaped I cannot tell. I was hit in the shoulder at the end of the action, but not hurt, and my coat shot through. Tom Burgh’s son was hit by a cannon shot-in the arm ; but what is extraordinary, not much hurt.

“Tell Lady Edward that I received her letters last night, and gave them to Lord Edward, who is very well. Be sure to remember me kindly to the duchess and all the little girls.” In the same affectionate way, he sends to Mrs. Canning to say that he had attended to her request respecting the orange-trees ; and

* Badajoz, Sept. 13th ; to his Grace the Duke of Richmond.

a number of instances still more expressive of a gentle and obliging disposition, unchanged by the scenes that surrounded him, might be adduced, if consistent with the dignity and importance of a campaign. The same care and humane attentions were bestowed on his inferiors, his staff, his officers, and his army. He was always the first to promote, and to rejoice in, their doing well, the last to take advantage of ease and relaxation for himself. "The army are recovering," he writes on the 13th, "and we shall be in high order again. The French have done nothing for the last month, and I believe meditate nothing except possibly the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, the success of which I shall prevent, if the Spaniards will hold out for a few days.*

"The last accounts I had of Lord Chatham were of the 20th of August. He had then, I think, gone the full length of his success. It was impossible to make any head on the continent against one army collecting in his front, and another in his rear in Holland. I send by this occasion a plan of the battle of Talavera, which is not very correct; but it will serve to give you some notion of it."

As affording pleasing evidence of the noble disposition, and equable temper, under difficult and annoying circumstances; or, as he would emphatically express it, "*when things went wrong*,"—of the distinguished subject of this memoir, the most trifling incidents lay claim to an interest they would not otherwise possess. The life of a soldier peculiarly abounds in adventures and circumstances, likely to produce these,—and they serve to mark the distinction between a really great and little,—a naturally good or a bad-hearted man. And we select this period in his career, before he had reached the height to which he afterwards rose, to show that even with adverse or disheartening prospects before him, Sir Arthur Wellesley and the Duke of Wellington preserved the same consistent conduct, and in the character of the soldier never for a moment lost the feelings, or forgot the duties of a man.

* Badajoz, Sept. 15th, 1809; to his Grace the Duke of Richmond.

Although immediately after the battle of Talavera, the British general had been declared generalissimo of the Spanish armies,* with the view of promoting a happier combination of efforts against the enemy, and greater unanimity of purpose, both civil and military, it was long before the influence conferred upon him produced the desired success. The extraordinary exertions he had made, and the fatigues he had undergone, had also the effect at this period of producing serious illness, which rendered it desirable that he should remove for the benefit of the air, with as little delay as possible to Lisbon. He went also with a view to forward the success of the great cause ; it was on the 28th of July, the last day of the memorable battle, that his brother the Marquis Wellesley had landed at Cadiz, and was received with marks of distinction by all ranks of people. In his capacity of ambassador extraordinary from Great Britain, every public honour was bestowed upon him, and a grand entertainment was prepared, at which the marquis with his suite, the heads of the government, army, navy, the British and Spanish envoys and agents, the Sicilian ambassador, the Pope's nuncio, with a number of the leading nobles, assembled. Patriotic toasts were given ; a brilliant display of Spanish beauties—the ladies of Cadiz, in the evening gave fresh attraction to the scene, while it was farther enlivened by brilliant theatrical decorations.

Having arranged affairs at Cadiz, the Marquis set out for Seville, where he concerted new measures with the Supreme Junta, to whom he recommended a regular system for a more effectual and vigorous prosecution of the war, while he refused to give any opinion, with regard to a regency, or the forms of civil government. It was his object to convince the people of Spain, that England only threw over them the shield of her power, to secure their independence and the public liberty of Europe, without any design of interfering with the internal policy of the state ; and that the presence of the English army was to rescue them only from the grasp of the foreign invader.

* At the same time he nobly refused to accept the pay offered him by a nation struggling for its independence.

While the efforts of this distinguished statesman served to promote concord, to strengthen the hands of the Spanish juntas, and, by devising well-matured measures, to promote the great objects for which the British commander, his brother, was so strenuously engaged, the government at home seemed more sensible of the importance of making corresponding exertions. As a peculiar mark of royal approbation, it was announced that his majesty had been graciously pleased to elevate Sir Arthur Wellesley to the dignity of the peerage of the United Empire, by the title of Viscount Wellington, of Talavera and of Wellington, and Baron Douro, of Wellington, in the county of Somerset.* Within a brief interval, likewise, Lord Wellington was appointed by the regency, Captain-general of all the forces serving in Portugal; and, before October, his army was once more in excellent order, and supplied with ample provisions and stores from Lisbon and Abrantes.

Meantime, however, the French were making rapid progress in Spain, on almost every side, while they continued to follow the British; and, crossing the river with 6000 horse and a brigade of infantry, on the 8th, attacked the Spanish division at Arzobispo, took 400 prisoners, five pieces of cannon, and put the entire body to the rout, numbers of which fled to the mountains in complete confusion. The ill consequences of General Cuesta's errors were now felt; not less than 70,000 of the enemy threatened the positions of the two armies, and could either press upon their right, and force their way to Cordova, or make new diversions, by detaching a large force into Portugal, and separating the allies. On both these points Lord Wellington was preparing to receive them: he wrote to General Crawfurd, giving him exact directions respecting the defence of his post, sent off engineers and a number of cannon,

* It was observed worthy of remark, that the motto of the family of Wellesley is, "Unica virtus necessaria,"—"Virtue alone is necessary." But Lord Wellington adopted a new motto, "Porro unum necessarium"—"One thing more is necessary," and he successfully put the maxim into execution.

while he desired General Cuesta to fortify the passage at Almaraz with all the heavy artillery he could command.

Nor were these precautions unnecessary; events seemed to be drawing to a crisis:—the whole host of marshals, Soult, Ney, Mortier, Kellermann, Victor, Sebastiani, with the king, and 5000 men from Suchet, were all concentrated in Estremadura. Another body of 34,000, had gone by Baños to Placentia, and none but the sick remained in Castile.

Under these circumstances, Lord Wellington, with his usual promptitude, applied to the junta to direct Romana, the Duque del Parque, and the bands of guerillas, to hover round the capital, and by attacking small parties, intercepting convoys, and threatening the enemy's rear, attempt a fresh diversion in favour of the combined armies. In case of the French forcing the passage of the bridge, at Almaraz, he had still secured a retreat; and should they threaten Portugal by Castello Branco, he had directed Marshal Beresford to march upon that point, while he himself hastened to its protection, by crossing the Tagus at Abrantes.

It was likewise necessary that arrangements should be adopted, to enable the troops to take advantage of any success they might obtain in case of offensive operations on the part of the enemy, or even in maintaining their defensive positions. The British army continued to be distressed for provisions; and the first care of their general was the formation of magazines, for various supplies, at reasonable distances in the rear of the armies. The country round them, though naturally fertile, was thinly peopled, and worse cultivated; it was requisite to send to great distances for such supplies as it afforded; and the troops were consequently ill-fed, and sometimes received no food at all.

Means of transport was the next consideration, both for the magazines, and to preserve the communication of the army with them, and to obtain new supplies of provisions and forage. No general was more sensible that troops can serve no good purpose, unless they were regularly fed; that a supply of food was as necessary to a Spanish as to an English army; and that

it was an error productive of much mischief, to suppose that a Spaniard in particular, or a man or animal of any country, could make an exertion without proper nourishment. It was this useful and humane doctrine, which made this excellent general so much deplore the necessity he was under of abandoning his wounded at Talavera, and to make an earnest appeal to the French commander, to supply their wants, and treat them well, if only in consideration of the manner in which the French sick and wounded, who had fallen so recently into his hands, had themselves been treated. And it is but justice to Marshal Victor and other French leaders, to state, that they did so, and were even scrupulously careful to adhere to the noble example set them by the English—one which formed so honourable a contrast to the Spanish mode of carrying on the war. As regarded the popular opinion that Spanish troops could subsist where those of another nation would not, and maintain themselves upon a smaller quantity, or coarser food, it was observed by his lordship that they were uniformly more clamourous for it, and more exhausted, if they did not receive it regularly, than were the English. Next to a good establishment of magazines, he was earnest in recommending to the Spanish authorities the adoption of a national uniform, as likely to lessen the practice which so very generally prevailed, of the soldiers throwing away their arms and accoutrements, running into the mountains, and pretending to be peasants. Large bodies could not throw aside the distinctive marks of dress; and as they would rather increase their danger by throwing away their arms and accoutrements, the state would, in that way also, find itself a gainer. It was a disgraceful fact, that whole corps, officers and men, ran off upon the first appearance of danger; and it was his opinion, if the truth could be ascertained, that the army of General Cuesta, which crossed the Tagus 36,000 or 38,000 strong, did not then consist of 30,000, although it had not lost 500 men in action with the enemy. He saw in what the real strength of the Spanish armies lay, and what their capabilities were; that discretion

in them would, indeed, be "the better part of valour,"—that they ought to shun general actions as their destruction, to take advantage of the strong points in a country so favourable for defence, harass their enemy, and introduce a sense of honour into their ranks, instead of the severe punishment of decimating the soldiers, and continually sacrificing them in cold blood. "Their principal army ought to be collected upon the Tagus, if they can hold that river; or, farther back, if they cannot; and, when ever they can form a body of troops, or the guerillas of the country can be put in motion, they should be employed upon the enemy's communications, and should be pushed on, even to Madrid."

The difficulty was to prevail on a government so constituted to exercise its authority, as well as to convince its judgment. Each commander arrogated to himself some degree of independent control, which he refused to yield to any other in command; and all parties, both military and civil, appeared to be much more fond of consulting their own independence than that of their country. Yet, with the usual confidence of ignorant and bigoted people, they looked with contempt upon those heretical views and opinions sought to be disseminated by nations or individuals more enlightened than themselves; and, as Lord Wellington feelingly expressed it, there was nothing so difficult—in fact, impossible—as to drive the Spaniards from a false assertion, or a sophistical or bad argument. In a letter to his brother, the Marquis of Wellesley,* he particularly alludes to their obstinate and self-complacent ignorance, and their strange, yet not wilful, misrepresentations of the motives and actions of others. "I consider it," he says, "but of little importance what remains in their own archives, if what they write is confined to them. But as those who have the honour of serving His Majesty are liable to misrepresentations and unfounded calumnies of every description, I am desirous of avoiding to give those who circulate those calumnies respecting my

* Deleytosa, 8th August.

actions those grounds for them which they would find in Don Martin de Garay's despatches to me, by requiring that he should adhere to the rule which His Majesty has laid down for my government.

"I am happy to find that the junta have taken measures to supply the armies. Your lordship will receive my sentiments upon the permanent arrangements to be adopted for this purpose by the courier who will deliver this letter. In the meantime, I must inform your Excellency that if the government have not already made great exertions to supply us; and if we do not experience the immediate effects of those exertions, by receiving a plentiful supply of provisions and forage, we must move away in as many detachments as there are roads from hence to the frontiers of Portugal. I assure your Excellency that since the 3d, the army has had no bread till yesterday, when about 4000 lb. of biscuit were divided among 30,000 mouths.

"The army will be useless in Spain, and will be entirely lost if this treatment is to continue; and I must say that if any efficient measures for our relief had been adopted by the government when they first received the account of our distresses from the want of provisions, we ought before now to have received the benefit of them. There is this day again no bread for the soldiers. I must, at the same time, do the late British minister the justice to declare, that I do not conceive that this deficiency of supplies for the army is at all to be attributed to any neglect or omission on his part. It is to be attributed to the poverty and exhausted state of the country; to the inactivity of the magistrates and people, to their disinclination to take any trouble, excepting that of packing up their property and running away when they hear of the approach of a French patrol; and to their habits of insubordination and disobedience of, and to the want of power in the government and their officers."

Bad, however, as affairs were, they were not at the worst, and the following presents no very encouraging prospects for

the success of the British campaign at this period :* “The public despatches, which I transmit with this letter, will give a full and faithful picture of the state of affairs here. You have undertaken an Herculean task ; and God knows that the chances of success are infinitely against you, particularly since the unfortunate turn which things have taken in Austria.

“I wish I could see you, or could send somebody to you ; but we are in such a situation that I cannot go to you myself, and I cannot spare the only one or two people to converse with whom, would be of any use to you. I think, therefore, that the best thing you can do is to send somebody to me as soon as you can ; that is to say if I remain in Spain, which I declare I believe to be almost impossible, notwithstanding that I see all the consequences of withdrawing. But a starving army is actually worse than none. The soldiers lose their discipline and their spirit. They plunder even in the presence of their officers. The officers are discontented, and are almost as bad as the men ; and with the army which a fortnight ago beat double their numbers, I should now hesitate to meet a French corps of half their strength.

“Send somebody, however, by the road of Merida and Truxillo, at both of which places he must hear of me.”

The Spanish head-quarters were now at Peraleda de Garbin ; (August 8th,) the enemy’s cavalry passed the river by the ford of Azutan ; while General Bassecourt still held possession of the bridge of Arzobispo. Marshal Beresford was in the Puerto de Perales, and the Duque del Parque occupied the pass of Banos, through which the enemy had passed a force of 34,000 men. Sir Robert Wilson in falling back upon the British left, finding himself too late to retire on Arzobispo, had penetrated from Escalona through the mountains to Banos, and there waited the attack of the enemy. Being weak and without artillery he was driven from his position by Ney, who then continued his march towards Salamanca.

* To his Excellency the Marquis of Wellesley, K.P.; Deleytosa, 8th August, 1809.

This was almost the first reverse suffered by the daring chief of the Lusitanian legion. Before the battle of Talavera he had pushed his parties to the very gates of Madrid, and opened communications with that city. He was on the point even of entering it, when recalled in expectation of the battle; and on this, as on other occasions, his extensive local knowledge and the confidence reposed in him by his troops rendered his services no less useful in the council than in the field.

After their defeat at the bridge, the Spaniards retired to Mesa de Ibor, their advanced guard to the high ground on the right, the main body on the left bank; and it was the intention of the British commander, should they be unable to maintain that position, to collect his own army at Jaraicejo, and directing General Crawford to fall back and march the whole to Truxillo, and thence by the high road to Badajos and Elvas. He desired the Spaniards to occupy Val de Casas, as part of their position at Mesa de Ibor, but, at the same time, placed no confidence in their maintaining that or their other positions. Suffering, however, as he had already done by the obstinacy of Cuesta, and the flight of his troops on the first attack, this high spirited man left no means untried to assist him, suggested to him every movement, giving the most minute directions, and proceeding himself to inspect the different points of defence, while the ungrateful old man, who had refused his noble ally the common assistance and courtesy required, would, if successful, reap the entire credit of repelling the attack. Yet, after his own army had been rescued from destruction, and the British, through his misconduct, sustained, during two days, the combined attacks of the French armies, and most gallantly at a terrible sacrifice repulsed them, he could, on the field, refuse the generous conqueror,—not the aid of an ally, for his troops could not be trusted,—but the use of ninety mules to draw the British artillery, in place of those lost in the action. He actually refused to give one, although there were hundreds in his army employed in drawing carts containing nothing. The consequence was, that Lord Wellington was now obliged to send back to Portugal

one if not two brigades of artillery drawn by bullocks, to procure mules,—if not, to destroy his guns. What must have been still more annoying was the fact that, within the last two days, this perverse and blundering old chief had lost nearly twenty pieces of artillery, the mules and horses attached to which had escaped. The Duke of Albuquerque offered on the spot to make over to his lordship the mules which belonged to the five pieces which he had lost, but General Cuesta thought proper to take them.

On the 11th, Lord Wellington removed his head-quarters to Jaraicejo, the main body of infantry occupying a wood immediately in the rear. Fresh columns of the enemy's troops were now reported to be marching upon Placentia, and, while here, making the most strenuous exertions to secure the positions, both of himself and his allies, from any sudden and overwhelming attack, he was assailed by a repetition of the same mean persecution and contemptible annoyance, from which he had no means of escaping. It seemed as if the only charges of which General Cuesta was capable, were not against the enemy but his best friend and ally, against whom his attacks were far more ingeniously and skilfully directed. Had he been in the secret service of France, he could scarcely have done more to defeat the designs of the British general, and to render the campaign as ineffective as possible. His new manœuvre was to create fresh discord among the English and the Spaniards, by the most bitter complaints that the former "had been plundering on all sides, sparing neither friend nor foe; for, while they robbed the inhabitants, they intercepted convoys of provisions and other articles destined for the relief of the Spanish soldiers."

Lord Wellington in his reply, which he addressed direct to Cuesta, presented a body of stubborn facts, from which no dexterity of the old general could escape; and, it is probable, that the triumphant refutation of Lord Wellington had some influence with the Spanish government in deciding upon Cuesta's removal, which took place soon afterwards. "When troops,"

he observed,* "are starving, which those under my command have been, as I have repeatedly told your Excellency since I joined you on the 22nd, and particularly had no bread whatever from the 3rd to the 8th instant, it is not astonishing that they should go to the villages and even to the mountains to look for food where they think they can get it.

"The complaints of the inhabitants, however, should not have been confined to the conduct of the British troops; in this very village I have seen the Spanish soldiers, who ought to have been elsewhere, take the doors off the houses which were locked up, in order that they might plunder the houses, and they afterwards burnt the doors.

"I absolutely and positively deny the assertion, that anything going to the Spanish army has been stopped by the British troops or commissaries. On the 7th, when the British troops were starving in the hills, I met a convoy of 350 mules loaded with provisions for the Spanish armies. I would not allow one of them to be touched, and they all passed on. General Sherbrooke on the following day, the 8th, gave a written order to another convoy, addressed to all British officers, to allow them to pass through the army unmolested. Yesterday I met on the road, and passed not less than 500 mules loaded with provisions for the Spanish army; and, no later than yesterday evening, my aide-de-camp gave an order to another large convoy, addressed to all British officers and soldiers not to impede its progress. I also declare to your Excellency most positively, on the honour of a gentleman, that the British army has received no provisions since it has been at Deleytosa, excepting some sent from Truxillo, by Senor Lozano de Torres; and I call upon the gentleman who has informed his friend that biscuit, addressed to the Spanish army, has been taken by my commissaries, to prove the truth of his assertion.

"But this letter from your Excellency brings the question

* Deleytosa, 11th August.

respecting provisions to a fair issue. I call upon your Excellency to state distinctly whether it is understood by you that the Spanish army are to have not only all the provisions the country can afford, but all those which are sent from Seville,—I believe as much for the service of the one army as of the other.

“I beg you to let me know, in reply to this letter, whether any magazines of provisions have been formed, and from whence the British troops are to draw their provisions ?

“I hope that I shall receive satisfactory answers to these two questions to-morrow morning. If I should not, I beg that your Excellency will be prepared to occupy the post opposite Almaraz, as it will be impossible for me to remain any longer in a country in which no arrangement has been made for the supply of provisions for the troops, and in which it is understood that all the provisions which are either found in the country or are sent from Seville, as I have been informed, for the use of the British army, are to be applied solely and exclusively to the use of the Spanish troops.

“In regard to the assertion in your Excellency’s letter that the British troops sell their bread to the Spanish soldiers, it is beneath the dignity of your Excellency’s situation and character to notice such things or for me to reply to them. I must observe, however, that the British troops could not sell that which they had not got, and that the reverse of the statement of your Excellency upon this subject is the fact, at the time the armies were at Talavera, as I have myself witnessed frequently in the streets of that town.”

If the statements contained in this clear and bold refutation of the base accusations brought against him required further corroboration, it was amply afforded on the same day, by an attack upon the British commissary as he was coming from Truxillo with bread and barley for the army. He was actually pursued by a body of Spanish cavalry who contrived to get from him all the barley. He secured the bread, a small part of which, however, the Spanish cavalry forced him to give up.

On this fact comment would be useless; but in forwarding

it to the captain-general, Don Gregorio Cuesta, Lord Wellington with equal truth and sarcasm observed :—" Unless it should be understood by your Excellency that all the bread baked in the country, and all that is sent from Seville, and all the barley, are to be appropriated exclusively to the use of the Spanish troops, I should hope you will take measures to punish this act of outrage, and prevent its recurrence in future."

Thus owing to the privations they suffered, and the ill-treatment they experienced in every way from the Spaniards, there was not a man in the army who, in the opinion of their leader, did not wish to return to Portugal. Yet the great captain-general, Don Gregorio, was heard to express his surprise that the British army should think itself neglected or ill-treated ; that its leader had determined, whatever might be the consequences to the valuable interests to which his Excellency referred, to march back into Portugal if not more plentifully supplied with provisions and means of transport, and that he should insist on the captain-general giving orders that the British officers and soldiers should *not be prevented by the Spaniards from buying what they want.* The only extenuation for conduct like this, and perhaps the most just as well as charitable way of viewing Cuesta's proceedings throughout, is to attribute them to age and imbecility ; for at the moment of his resigning his command, it appears that he had a paralytic stroke which deprived him of the use of his left leg, though his mind remained much in the same state as before. Upon the 14th, two days subsequently, Lord Wellington had the pleasure of receiving a letter from General Eguia which announced his appointment to the command, and went into some details relative to their conjoint operations for the future. But these, except on a defensive system, seemed every day to become more distant. No horses, mules, or cars, notwithstanding the most earnest requisitions, could be obtained ; and it became a question, in the event of a compulsory movement, whether the British would not be compelled to abandon all to the enemy.

Sickness, resulting from continued privations, instead of being diminished by the utmost medical care, rapidly increased. The hospitals received new occupants faster than the invalids left them, and it soon became difficult to muster on parade a force of more than 17,000 men. With regard to the army of Eguia, all accounts agreed in representing it as reduced to less than 20,000 men, thus exactly fulfilling the prediction of the British commander as to the results of Spanish panic, desertion, and throwing down of arms. Nor was this all, affairs in a little time began to assume a still more threatening aspect. Tidings arrived of Vanegas having suffered two severe defeats, at Aranjuez and Almoriand, from the combined forces of Sebastiani and Victor ; and that he was driven with tremendous loss and slaughter into the mountains. The French on all sides assumed the superiority they exercised before Lord Wellington's arrival in Portugal and Spain,—they had the advantage of an early communication from their right at Placentia, to their left in La Mancha, and they could collect their different corps without any difficulty at any one point.

It now became evident that the British positions upon the Tagus could not long be maintained under the circumstances in which the army was placed. The prospect of a retreat, accompanied by apprehensions for the safety of the hospitals—and the abandonment of brigades of artillery and stores, was most disheartening and cheerless ; and together with the gross neglect and ill-usage which the troops had experienced, gave rise to the same feelings of discontent and insubordination as aggravated the sufferings of the celebrated retreat to Corunna. Yet even such a necessity had entered into the deep laid calculations of the British general, in the ardour of entering on a great campaign, and in the hour of victory. He was not taken by surprise therefore by a course of events which he could not control ; like the enemy, they always found him prepared. At the same time he felt deeply, as on the occasion of being compelled to leave his sick and wounded at Talavera, the protracted trials and sufferings of his army. After the appointment of

General Eguia the same causes continued to operate and were daily producing more disastrous results. The great bulk of the British troops was composed of second battalions, many, both officers and men were extremely young, and of very inferior stamina to those whom Sir John Moore had led into the field. With the exception of the guards, the buffs, the 48th and 61st regiments, with the light division under General Crawford, there were few which at any less adverse period, would have been considered in a state of efficiency, fit to encounter active service. Unfortunately also the fine cavalry, whom it was impossible to rate too highly, were dropping off by two and three daily; both men and horses sickened and died in a degree that was far more alarming than the casualties which befel the infantry. A gloomy picture of the future was plainly visible in the looks of all; a silent melancholy seemed to prey upon the spirits; foreboding and despair sat upon the features of the boldest—and it may almost be said with an eyewitness of the scene,* that the only one who bore a look elate—and who dared to hope at this juncture, was he upon whom rested the greatest weight of responsibility. At the worst he had only to fall back upon his own avowed opinions, and his own resources—for he had already declared his conviction that even in the event of Spain's subjection, Portugal could be defended. His thoughts therefore had only to take up the train of reasoning already familiar to him; and he as naturally turned to Portugal as the great resource—no less than the centre of all his efforts, as the homebound traveller proceeds cheerfully on his return. Accordingly his measures were speedily adopted to re-enter that kingdom, where in comfortable cantonments as before, the health of the sick might be restored, the hungry, and they were all that were left of this noble army, fed, and the wounded and the wearied find repose.

It would be something likewise to escape the system, both political and military, which had operated with such a fatal and destructive influence upon the energies both of the British

* Lord Londonderry. Narrative of the War, p. 355.

leader and his army, withholding from them not merely the necessities of life—but even the boon of hope itself; as if all who came within the vortex of Spanish anarchy, misrule, and all the discordant elements which can jar with each other, were to be swallowed up in the same fate. The weakness or treachery of the supreme junta became every day more dangerous; the duplicity of the authorities set all confidence and all calculation at defiance. So deeply rooted was the vice in the whole character and habits of the people, confirmed by their vicious system, and rendered more intolerable by the circumstances of the war—that the power of the state whether civil or military, was as deeply embued with it as those whom it had to govern. General Eguia differed only from his predecessor the captain-general by the profuseness of his professions; and in the first interview with the British commander he declared that happen what might to his own, England's soldiers should always be supplied; and on the very days when assurances like this were made, he would permit parties of his own troops to seize and appropriate stores of biscuit or other articles prepared for the use of the British, and often on their way to the cantonments. Yet during these transactions, with true national consistency, did the supreme junta and its new chief importune Lord Wellington,—with all his admirable temper and magnanimity half maddened by their inordinate selfishness, vanity, and folly—to resume the offensive, and like Vanegas, Cuesta, and even Sir Robert Wilson with his legion alone, march towards the capital and give battle to the French. At the same time, they refused to supply that army with any means of transport, with provisions, forage, all articles necessary to the bare existence of men—much more a regular army, and that of a brave ally; insomuch that it is an undoubted fact that the British soldiers would have had infinitely better chances of supporting themselves had they been in the country of an enemy instead of an ally,—nay, far more fairly treated had they all been prisoners of war.

Whether unable or unwilling to maintain the British, the

Spanish government appeared to have become perfectly indifferent as to their fate; while a force of more than 70,000 French threatened to destroy, not a single Spanish corps was in communication to support them, except the remains of the routed and half-deserted body of men, commanded by the new chief, Eguia. It was also understood by Lord Wellington, that orders had reached that commander to march to the support of Vanegas, taking the British along with them, could they be prevailed upon to make a forward movement; but, in case of refusal, to proceed without them. At the same time came intelligence that the enemy were preparing to advance into Portugal, by way of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida, and although Marshal Beresford represented his forces as sufficient to obstruct their progress, the British commander knew too well the character of his troops to place confidence in them, and determined to fall back without delay. He felt that he should be better enabled to give support, even to the Spaniards, from a position in which he could obtain necessaries for his troops, than by adopting their wild project of an offensive movement, while enduring all the complicated miseries of sickness and want, from Jaraicejo.

Adversity is the great school in which soldiers, as well as men, must be taught to fortify their minds and acquire the moral duties of patience, prudence, and perseverance. It was a noble idea of one of the heathen writers, that there was no sight more pleasing to the gods, than that of a good man struggling with his adverse fate: the consciousness of being engaged in a good cause, of making every sacrifice, and exerting every faculty to do that which is just and upright, animates him with an enduring strength, which, rising above all difficulties, feeling no shame, and suffering no dishonour from temporary defeat, generally rewards him with ultimate victory. It was this noble species of strength which now enabled the British commander to display the same characteristics of equanimity and resolution, which he had shown during his more prosperous career. No man, in a bad cause, was ever consistent or strong-minded; he

must fear; and that fear darkens the intellectual vision, as much as the sense of wrong deprives his heart of strength, and secretly disturbs the conscience. But men of lofty character, in whom a strong sense of duty supersedes all other cares, are incapable of fear or weakness; they feel a noble pleasure in grappling with difficulties which would bear down common minds to the earth; they like to look obstacles boldly in the face, with unflinching nerve; and, where the conflict of events rages the thickest against them, there, like the true soldier, they still delight to be present.

In all the difficulties, as well as in all the battles, of Moore and Wellington, this appears the distinguishing feature of their minds—covetous only of honour, and emulous of applause, their ambition was yet tempered by solid and elevated wisdom; for they were men of mind and genius, far more kindred than the little world of party has supposed. There never, perhaps, was a more erroneous impression than that which, at one period, so generally obtained, that Sir John Moore, during his campaign, evinced a disposition to gloom and despondency; that he was deficient in confidence and daring; that in like circumstances, Lord Wellington would have displayed more hope, and ventured more; whereas, all circumstances would tend to prove that directly the contrary is nearer to the truth. What has been termed despondency, was a calm and wise conviction of the perils by which his army was surrounded, a knowledge of which the buzzing insects around him, like moths round the flame, were wholly destitute; his want of confidence was a certainty of the utter helplessness of his allies; his pride of chivalrous daring was shown, by permitting his noble mind to be stung, by the same insects, into one hazardous step, by which he accumulated fresh difficulties upon him, which rendered his retreat one of great suffering, though among the most able on record, and his victory only the triumph of death.

With regard to the probable conduct of Lord Wellington under similar circumstances, there is every reason to believe on the authority of his own written opinions, on that of the details

already given of his own campaign, his sufferings, and his early contemplated retreat into Portugal, that the sole instance in which he would have acted in a different manner, would have been, in declining to confront difficulties and dangers so great; in not hesitating a moment, from any representations of the Spanish government, or British agents, in putting into execution that wise measure of a timely retreat on Portugal, which Moore himself had resolved upon, but which his too daring spirit, goaded by the ignorant and interested, led him to abandon, and march to the attack. The cautious and prudent measures, pursued by Lord Wellington at the period of which we are speaking, and the points of resemblance between his difficulties and final retreat, and those of his distinguished predecessor, though not beset with half the overwhelming force which bore down on all sides to encompass Moore, naturally brought the parallel, so often and unreasonably made to the disadvantage of the latter, from mean and worthless motives, to our recollection. If further proof were required of the justness of the opinion we have advanced, it is supplied by the prudent steps adopted by Lord Wellington at this time, who, under circumstances far less unpromising, with no overwhelming enemy in pursuit, deemed it necessary to abandon the ground he had gained in Spain, and to fall back upon his resources. What is the fair inference? So far from showing more confidence and spirit in the situation of Sir John Moore, he would assuredly have desponded, as it is absurdly termed, in the same manner: with the same wise forecast and caution, he would, like Moore, have made up his mind, and taken the responsibility on himself, to retreat; and he perhaps would not have been deterred from his purpose, by the ignorant clamour of the weak and blind.

Lord Wellington had not completed his arrangements for withdrawing into Portugal until the 20th of August. Two days previously he addressed a letter to his brother, the Marquis of Wellesley, repeating the daily recurrence of those grievances, which, notwithstanding the most solemn promises from the

supreme junta, continued unredressed. Again he denounces the wretched system practised by the highest as well as by the lowest of this unhappy land; a system compounded of indolence, inefficiency, and deceit. "General Eguia," he says, "did me the honour of calling upon me yesterday, and he promised that the evils complained of should be redressed. I desired him, however, to prepare to occupy in the course of the night, the posts in the neighbourhood of the bridge of Almaraz, as it was impossible for me to remain any longer in this part of the country, suffering, as the army does, from wants of every description.

"In the course of this month, if proper measures, or, indeed, if any measures had been adopted, supplies might have been forwarded to us from the most distant parts of Andalusia; but we have not received a mule or a cart, or an article of provision of any description, under any order given, or arrangement made, by the government; so that when I march, I shall be obliged to leave behind my ammunition, and six, probably twelve, pieces of cannon; and I assure your Excellency, most solemnly, that, since the 22nd of last month, the horses of the cavalry and artillery have not received three regular deliveries of barley, and the infantry have not received ten days bread.

"Under these circumstances, I can remain no longer in Spain; and I request you to give notice to the government that I am about to withdraw into Portugal.

"I have no doubt but that the government have given orders that we should be provided as we ought to be; but orders, I have to observe, are not sufficient. To carry on the contest with France to any good purpose, the labour and services of every man and of every beast in the country, should be employed in the support of the armies; and these should be so classed and arranged, as not only to secure obedience to the orders of the government, but regularity and efficiency in the performance of the services required from them. Magazines might then, with ease, be formed, and transported wherever circumstances might require that armies should be stationed.

"But as we are now situated, 50,000 men are collected upon a spot which cannot afford subsistence for 10,000 ; and there are no means of sending to a distance to make good the deficiency.

"The junta have issued orders to supply the deficiencies of means of transport, as well as of provisions ; but, from want of arrangement, there are no persons to obey their orders, and this army would perish, if I should remain, before the supplies could arrive.

"I hope your Excellency and the government will believe, that I have not determined to go till it has become absolutely necessary. I assure you that there is not a general officer in this army who is not convinced of the necessity of my immediate departure."

To show, at the same time, that Lord Wellington's views were not purely military,—that, with the intelligence and foresight of a strong and penetrating mind, he saw and reasoned upon coming events,—and, with the disposition of a humane and generous man, never wished an appeal to the sword while the same object could be effected by pacific measures ;—we pause for a moment to give his opinion respecting the prospects and the expediency of continuing the war. "I think," he says to Marshal Beresford,* "that the circumstances in which the world, and this peninsula in particular, will be placed in a short time, call upon you to report, at an early period, the actual progress which has been made, and the prospects which exist, of forming an army in Portugal. The desertion of the troops, the prospect of stopping that evil, the means and their efficiency of supplying the vacancies which it occasions, would be prominent points in such a report."

And how just and disinterested are the following observations,—how favourably distinguished from the thoughts and occupations which most generally engage the time of military men. "I think we owe this to government at an early period,

* Jaraicejo, 19th August.

in order to enable them to determine how far they will go in expense, and how much they will risk in an army to maintain Portugal, in the existing situation of the world.

"A great deal has been done, and government may be supposed to have acted rightly in sending their troops when they did, and in saving Portugal when the French were involved in the Austrian contest. But the question becomes one of a different description, that contest being finished; and, I think, that government will be assisted in their decision very much, by the prospect which you may be enabled to hold out of the existence of a Portuguese military force."*

Independent of the causes already assigned for the retreat of Lord Wellington, the actual situation of the French armies, at a period when the British were so weakened both in point of numbers and in efficiency, might fairly be allowed to enter into the British general's calculations; yet, with the frankness the singleness of purpose, and love of truth for which he was from his earliest years remarkable, he declared in his correspondence with the Spanish general and the government, that, whatever motives they chose to impute, his movements were the result of a necessity created by the want of system and method pursued by them. The following is, indeed, a melancholy picture of the consequences of the absence of due arrangements and means to execute the orders given to the different authorities for the supply of the British. "According to the return of the state of the magazine at Truxillo, sent to me by your Excellency yesterday, it did not contain a sufficiency to feed the British even for one day. This being the case, the wants of the army must continue; I must lose men and horses daily, and, therefore, in order to save the army, I must remove to a country in which I know that I shall get food, and other assistance which I require.

"Whatever your Excellency may think of the truth or falsehood of my assertion, I repeat that want, and the apprehension

* To Marshal Beresford, Jaraicejo, 18th August.

of its further consequences, are the only reasons for my quitting Spain.

"I have the honour to inform your excellency that, besides the ammunition left at Deleytosa, I shall be obliged to leave here another large quantity, from the want of means of moving it. I shall send an officer to Deleytosa to-morrow, to deliver to the officer whom you may appoint to receive it, the ammunition which is there; and if you will send an officer here in the course of the day, he shall receive charge of the ammunition which will be left here, if your Excellency wishes to have these articles; if you should not wish to have them I propose to destroy them, as I have no means of moving them from hence."

Under circumstances like these, the British army broke up from its position on the 20th, without being harrassed by any portion of the enemy's force, and proceeded in perfectly good order on its retreat by five marches through Truxillo, Majadas, Medelin, and Merida upon Badajos. The French divisions at this time occupied in force, Salamanca, Placentia, Talavera, Oropesa, and Arzobispo; while a part of Victor's corps, with that of Sebastiani, was in La Mancha. But there was no demonstration of hostilities against the British, or of an immediate invasion of Portugal; and the enemy, before whom Lord Wellington was now retiring, was the Spanish government, with gaunt famine, treachery, and calumny in its rear. It is difficult, at this time of day, to credit the extent to which the heartless system of duplicity and cruelty was carried against the noble minded general and his troops; and, had he not himself placed evidence of the disgraceful fact upon record, no assertions of the future historian, however well-founded, would have been believed by posterity. The instant he commenced his retrograde movement, he was assailed by a storm of invectives and reproaches, on the part both of the government and the people, as if he had been not the injured party but the secret friend of Napoleon, and the author of all those blunders and persecutions of which he was really made the victim. They chose, the moment of his departure, to inflict the additional

mortification of attributing the worst and basest motives to the most wise and necessary measure. On reaching Truxillo, he vindicated himself from their foul aspersions in a letter addressed to his brother, the Marquis of Wellesley,* and expresses the scorn and indignation of an upright mind:—"I now beg to refer your Excellency to the enclosed copy of a letter, of which I have the original in my possession, from the Alcalde of Guadalupe to Mr. Commissary Downie, that he had received the directions of Don L. de Calvo, which he had obeyed, *to send to Mesa de Ibor, the head-quarters of the Spanish army, the provisions which Mr. Downie had ordered, and which had been procured for the British army to be sent to the magazine at Truxillo.*

"This is the honour and good faith with which the arrangement respecting the magazine at Truxillo was to be carried into execution; and this Don L. de Calvo is the gentleman in whose assurances I was to place confidence (as if I had not already gone far enough in confidence in the assurances of the agent of the Spanish government,) that all the contents of the magazine at Truxillo should be given to the British troops, to the exclusion of the Spanish army, and that every thing which the army required, of every description, was on the road to Seville.

"I find that it is intended to justify the Spanish government for their neglect of us, by circulating a report that my complaints of want of supplies, of means of transport, and, I might have added, of the common attention and even of acts of humanity towards the army, and particularly towards the wounded, were mere pretexts.

"This plan has been carried into execution as far as Senor Lozano de Torres; the Spanish superintendent attached to this army declared publicly yesterday, that he could prove that the British army, instead of wanting food, had received double rations ever since it arrived in Spain; and yet this same gentle-

* Truxillo, 21st August.

man has expressed to me in the most indignant terms, more than once, the shame he felt as a Spaniard on account of the manner in which we had been treated, and the privations which we were made to endure, which expressions he acknowledges this day. These reports and insinuations against me may do very well for the people of Seville, but the British army will not soon forget the treatment it has received ; and I know that there is not a general officer in it, and, I believe, not an officer or soldier, who does not think that I should have neglected its interests, and even should have risked its existence, if I had delayed its departure for another day."

After the exposure of so flagrant a case as this, any further attempt to throw light on the causes of Lord Wellington's inactivity, the sufferings of his army, and his final return into Portugal, would justly be considered an idle display of words, if not a tax upon the patience of the reader. It is conclusive, and at once decides the question as to the truth or falsehood, the justice or the injustice, of Lord Wellington's assertions, and the expositions he made of the real authors of the losses and sufferings which befel his brave but ill-requited army.*

During the sad and toilsome march from Jaraicejo to Badajos, Lord Wellington, so long harassed in mind, was taken seriously unwell. What was rare with him, he was obliged to travel in his carriage for several days, but, with the change of scene and circumstances, and still persevering in his active duties, he soon shook off the disorder. From Merida, on the 28th, he wrote despatches to the British government, in which he stated his views very fully, and especially with regard to the progress of the war. The information he had acquired in the last two

* It is singular enough that, at this very period, the Spanish government, as a mark of its approbation, had appointed Lord Wellington to the rank of a Captain-general in the Spanish service, the pay of which we have seen that he declined ; and they presented him on the same occasion with six Andalusian horses, in the name of King Ferdinand VII., which he accepted, subject, as a matter of form, to the good pleasure and permission of his own sovereign.

months had opened his eyes respecting its real character and prospects, and he stated facts well calculated to enable the British ministry to form a decided opinion upon the subject. He calculated the French force in the Peninsula at not less than 125,000 men, and of this imposing number at least 70,000 manned the frontiers of Portugal. St. Cyr, with about 20,000, was engaged in the siege of Girona, Suchet was at the head of 14,000 in Aragon, and the remainder were employed in garrisons, keeping up the communications with France; but all, if required, were efficient troops, disposable for the field. They were in possession of all the strong places with formidable garrisons, as at Pampeluna and Barcelona; and, to oppose these well-disciplined armies, the Spaniards had 50,000 men under Vanegas and Eguia, 25,000 in the north with Romana and the Duque del Parque, 5 or 6000 collected by Blake, add to which a guerrilla system carried on by an armed but wild population in the mountains of Aragon and Catalonia.

Thus, in the second year after the outbreak of the revolution, the Spanish government had no more than 80,000 men in arms, the character and composition of which were still more defective than were the numbers to carry on a contest with the French, even in their present state of reduced strength. If to these numbers were added all the troops that could be brought into the field, consisting of 28,000 British and 10,000 Portuguese, it will be seen how inferior were the allies even in point of numbers to the enemy. In this estimate Lord Wellington only calculated those men on both sides who could be brought into the field to fight.

In respect to the composition of these armies, he found the French well supplied with troops of the different descriptions and arms required,—infantry, artillery, and cavalry, heavy and light,—whereas the cavalry of the patriots comprised only 7000 with the old army of Cuesta, 3000 under Venegas, and about 2000 distributed throughout the rest of Spain. The amount of the English cavalry was reduced by mortality to 2500, and the Portuguese army had not altogether more than 600.

With respect to the description of the Spanish troops, it was found to be a far more serious evil than either the inferiority of their numbers or their composition. The cavalry were without discipline, though well clothed, armed, and accoutred. They were also remarkably well mounted ; and their horses, especially those of Eguia's army, in good condition. "But," as it was often observed by the English commander, "they had never in any one instance behaved as soldiers ought to do in the presence of an enemy. They made no scruple of running off in a body, and, after an action, were to be found in every village and every shady bottom within fifty miles of the field of battle." The Spanish artillery, on the contrary, he found "to be wholly unexceptionable, and the Portuguese artillery excellent."

It is evident from the last passage, that Lord Wellington was always ready and even eager to do justice to any portion of the Spanish army, or to any measure of the government which deserved his approbation. He had entered the country filled with hope in pursuit of their routed enemy, and was well disposed for a truly amicable and active co-operation to extend the advantages he had gained, and was, moreover, inclined to bear many inconveniences and privations, and to make the best of every thing. Even when deprived of common necessities,—a prey to famine and pestilence, he never allowed himself, in his strictures upon the authors of his sufferings, to transgress the bounds of truth and justice,—to magnify their faults and errors,—to refuse the assistance and the invaluable advice he could so well give, on whatever side they were required.

"In respect to the great body of all armies," he continues, "I mean the infantry, it is lamentable to see how bad that of the Spaniards is, and how unequal to a contest with the French. They are armed, I believe, well ; they are badly accoutred, not having the means of saving their ammunition from the rain,—not clothed in some instances at all, and others in such a manner as to make them look like peasants, which ought of all things to be avoided ; and their discipline appears to me to be confined to placing them in the ranks, three deep at very close order,

and to the manual exercise. It is impossible to calculate upon any operation with these troops. It is said that sometimes they behave well, though, I acknowledge, that I have never seen them behave otherwise than ill. Bassecourt's corps, which was supposed to be the best in Cuesta's army, and was engaged on our left in the mountains at the battle of Talavera, was kept in check throughout the day by one French battalion; this corps has since run away at the bridge of Arzobispo leaving its guns, and many of the men, according to the usual Spanish custom, throwing away their arms, accoutrements, and clothing. It is a curious circumstance respecting this affair at Arzobispo, (in which Soult writes that the French took thirty pieces of cannon,) that the Spaniards ran off in such a hurry, that they left their cannon loaded and unspiked; and that the French, although they drove the Spaniards from the bridge, did not think themselves strong enough to push after them, and Colonel Waters, whom I sent in with a flag of truce on the 10th, relating to our wounded, found the cannon on the road, abandoned by the one party and not taken possession of, and probably not known of, by the other. This practice of running away and throwing off arms, accoutrements, and clothing, is fatal to everything except a re-assembly of the men in a state of nature, who as regularly perform the same manœuvre the next time an occasion offers. Nearly 2000 ran off on the evening of the 27th from the battle of Talavera, (not a hundred yards from the place where I was standing,) who were neither attacked nor threatened with an attack, and who were frightened only with the noise of their own fire; they left their arms and accoutrements on the ground, their officers went with them, and they and the fugitive cavalry plundered the baggage of the British army which had been sent to the rear. Many others went whom I did not see.

"Nothing can be worse than the officers of the Spanish army; and it is extraordinary, where a nation has devoted itself to war as this nation has, by the measures it has adopted in the last two years, so little progress has been made in any one

branch of the military profession by any individual, and that the business of an army should be so little understood. They are really children in the art of war, and I cannot say that they do anything as it ought to be done, with the exception of running away and assembling again in a state of nature. I really believe that much of this deficiency of numbers, composition, discipline and efficiency, is to be attributed to the existing government of Spain. They have attempted to govern the kingdom in a state of revolution, by an adherence to old rules and systems, and with the aid of what is called enthusiasm; and this last is, in fact, no aid to accomplish anything, and is only an excuse for the irregularity with which every thing is done, and for the want of discipline and subordination of the armies."

This is excellent. The sterling good sense and the sound judgment of the British general, with his frank and open nature, opposed to every thing like subterfuge and deceit, soon detected, through all its flimsy arts, the idle bombast and shallow presumption of the whole Spanish system,—with its powerless government, its patriotic juntas, and enthusiastic patriots,—plundering the British magazines and baggage, while their generous ally was engaged in a terrific contest with more than double the number of the enemy. We say generous, because there existed no compact between the British government and the Spanish junta to supply that aid,—the avowed object of Lord Wellington being confined to the liberation and independence of Portugal.

Nor is it only for the light they throw upon the war that the opinions of Lord Wellington at this period are truly valuable; the sentiments of a man engaged in arduous enterprize, surrounded with difficulties, and labouring under sufferings and disappointments brought on by the misconduct of others, are at all periods, perhaps, best calculated to illustrate his general character,—his strength or weakness of mind, in short his real worth, and the extent of his resources. It is in this point of view we consider his present situation, and the circumstances by which he was surrounded as the most interesting, if not the

most important in his military career ; and in the private letters as in the public correspondence of this high-minded man—we are enabled by blending them with his own narration of events, to represent him fully, as he was, the historian of his own campaigns—the biographer of his own actions. So ample and so valuable, indeed, are the details which he has left us, that little more than the duties of a reporter are requisite in those who come after him ; if by impartial judgment and commentary they are ambitious of rendering their work what it ought to be, a genuine record of the life and actions of the Duke of Wellington. It is for this reason, no less than for the instruction and entertainment which his own writings continually afford, that we have aimed at keeping the distinguished subject of this memoir, and his recorded views of the events of his life as they occurred, as much as possible before the eye, in preference to going into general or collateral details, equally indefinite and unsatisfactory. We feel too great regard and respect for the noble character of him whose actions we have undertaken to record ; we reap too much pleasure and advantage from more familiar acquaintance with his views and principles to presume to dissipate the reader's attention by desultory discussions, by details of conflicting authorities, or variety of references to the authority and opinions of others. It is to us at least, far more delightful and animating to behold a character like Lord Wellington's, brought before the eye in true and vivid colours—throughout the many and eventful vicissitudes of his life—to make him speak as he spoke, appear as he really appeared at successive epochs to himself and others, by giving his own acts, his motives for, and his reasonings upon them, in his own words :—" People," he observes to the British government,* " are very apt to believe that enthusiasm carried the French through their revolution, and was the parent of those exertions which have nearly conquered the world ; but if the subject is nicely examined it will be found that enthusiasm was the name only, but that force was the

* Merida, Aug. 25th.

instrument which brought forward those great resources under the system of terror which first stopped the allies ; and that a perseverance in the same system of applying every individual and every description of property to the service of the army, by force, has since conquered Europe.

“ After this statement, you will judge for yourselves, whether you will employ any, and what strength of army, in support of the cause in Spain.

“ Circumstances with which you are acquainted have obliged me to separate myself from the Spanish army ; and I can only tell you that I feel no inclination to join in co-operation with them again upon my own responsibility ; and that I shall see my way very clearly before me, indeed, before I do so ; and I do not recommend you to have any thing to do with them in their present state.

“ Before I quit this part of the subject it may be satisfactory to you to know that I do not think matters would have been much better if you had sent your large expedition to Spain instead of the Scheldt. You could not have equipped it in Galicia or any where in the north of Spain. If we had had 60,000 men instead of 20,000 in all probability we should not have got to Talavera to fight the battle, for want of means and provisions. But if we had got to Talavera we could not have gone farther, and the armies would probably have separated for want of means of subsistence, probably without a battle, but certainly afterwards. Besides you will observe that your 40,000 men, supposing them to be equipped, and means to exist of feeding them, would not compensate for the deficiency of numbers, of composition, and of efficiency in the Spanish armies ; and that supposing they had been able to remove the French from Madrid, they could not have removed them from the Peninsula, even in the existing state of the French force.

“ I now come to another branch of the subject, which is Portugal itself. I have not got from Beresford his report upon the present, and the probable future state of the Portuguese army ; and therefore I should wish to be understood as writing

upon this part of the subject, liable to correction from him. My opinion is, and always has been, that the mode of applying the services of the English officers to the Portuguese army has been erroneous. I think that Beresford ought to have had the temporary assistance of the ablest officers the British service could afford—that these officers ought not to have been posted to regiments in the Portuguese army, but under the title of adjutants to the field-marshal, or any other; they ought to have superintended discipline, military movements, and arrangements of all descriptions, wherever they might be; fewer officers would then have answered his purpose, and every one given to him would have been useful; whereas many—(all in the inferior ranks,) are, under existing arrangements, useless. Besides this, the selection of officers sent out to Portugal for this service has been unlucky, and the decision on the questions which I sent to England on the 7th of June, has been made without reference to circumstances, or to the feelings or opinions of the individuals on whom it was to operate; and just like every other decision I have ever seen from the same quarter, as if men were stocks and stones.

"To this add that rank (Portuguese rank I mean) has been given in the most capricious manner. In some instances a man not in the army at all is made a brigadier-general; in others, another who was the senior of the brigadier-general when both where in the army, is a lieutenant-colonel; then a junior lieutenant-colonel is made a brigadier-general, his senior a colonel, and his senior a junior colonel; and there are instances of juniors being preferred to seniors in every rank; in short the Prince Regent of Portugal is a despotic prince, and his commissions have been given to British officers and subjects in the most arbitrary manner at the Horse Guards: and the answer to all these complaints at the Horse Guards must be uniform, nobody has any right to complain; the Prince Regent has a right to give to any body any commission he pleases, bearing any date he chooses to assign to it. The officers of this army have to a man quitted the Portuguese service, as I

said they would, and there is not an officer who has joined it from England who would not quit it if we would allow him, but here we keep them : so much for that arrangement.

“ The subject upon which particularly I wished Beresford to report, was the state of the Portuguese army in respect to its numbers. The troops have lately deserted to an alarming degree ; and in fact none of the regiments are complete. The Portuguese army is recruited by conscriptions constitutionally, very much in the same manner with the French army ; but then it must be recollect that for the last fifty years nearly, the troops have never left their province, and scarcely ever their native town ; and their discipline and the labour and exertion required from them, were nothing.

“ Things are much altered lately, and notwithstanding that the pay has been much increased, I fear that the animal is not of the description to bear up against what is required of him, and he deserts most terribly.

“ The military forces stationed in the provinces enabled the civil government to carry into execution the conscription ; but under present circumstances the military force is upon principle, as well as necessity, removed to a distance. The government has been so frequently overthrown that it can hardly be said to exist—and there is another circumstance which I am afraid cramps its operations, particularly those operations which are to put a restraint upon the people ; and that is that they are all armed, and they defy the civil magistrate and the government whose authority is unsupported by a sufficient military force. I am, therefore, very apprehensive that Beresford will find it impossible to fill his ranks, however, as I said before, I should wish government to delay making up their minds on this part of the subject till I shall be able to send them Beresford’s report for which I have called.

“ The next point in this subject is, supposing the Portuguese army to be rendered efficient, what can be done with it and Portugal, if the French should obtain possession of the remainder of the Peninsula ? My opinion is that we ought to be

able to hold Portugal, if the Portuguese army and militia are complete. The difficulty upon this sole question is in the embarkation of the British army. There are so many entrances into Portugal; the whole country being frontier, that it would be very difficult to prevent the enemy penetrating, and it is probable that we should be obliged to confine ourselves to the preservation of that which is most important—the capital.

"It is difficult, if not impossible, to bring the contest for the capital to extremities, and afterwards to embark the British army. You will see what I mean by a reference to the map. Lisbon is so high up the Tagus, that no army that we could collect would be able at the same time to secure the navigation of the river by the occupation of both banks, and the possession of the capital. One of the objects must I fear be given up, and that which the Portuguese would give up would be the navigation of the Tagus, and, of course, our means of embarkation. However, I have not entirely made up my mind on this interesting point. I have a great deal of information upon it; but I should wish to have more before I can decide upon it. In the meantime, I think that government should look to sending back at least the coppered transports, as soon as the grand expedition shall have done with them; and as they receive positive intelligence that Napoleon is reinforcing his armies in Spain; for you may depend upon it that he and his marshals must be desirous of revenging upon us the different blows we have given them; and that when they come into the Peninsula, their first and great object will be to get the English out.

"I think the first part of my letter will give you my opinion respecting one notion you entertained—namely, that the Spaniards might be induced to give the command of their armies to a British commander-in-chief. If such an offer should be made to me, I shall decline to accept it till I shall receive His Majesty's pleasure; and I strongly recommend to you unless you mean to incur the risk of the loss of your army, not to have any thing to do with Spanish warfare on any ground whatever, in the existing state of things. In respect to Cadiz the fact is

this, that the jealousy of 'all the Spaniards, even of those most attached to us, respecting Cadiz, is so rooted, that even if the government should cede that point (and in their present difficulties I should not be surprised if they were to cede it,) to induce me to remain in Spain; I should not think any garrison which this army could spare, to be safe in the place.

"If you should take Cadiz, you must lay down Portugal, and take up Spain; you must occupy Cadiz with a garrison of from 15,000 to 20,000 men; and you must send from England an army to be employed in the field with the Spaniards, and make Cadiz your retreat instead of Lisbon.

"You ought along with Cadiz to insist upon the command of the armies of Spain. I think you would certainly be able, in that case, to get away your troops, secure the Spanish ships, &c., &c. But you see from the facts in the commencement of this letter how little prospect you have of bringing the contest to the conclusion for which we all wish.

"I shall be very glad if you will send us the remount horses, and any regiment of dragoons that is to come, as soon as possible; the best thing to do then, probably, would be to draft the horses of one of the regiments to complete the others, and send that regiment home dismounted. It would be very desirable, also, to send us 600 or 700 sets of horse appointments."

With a previous knowledge of his views and opinions of the war at this period, the subsequent events and transactions in which the British general was engaged will be found to assume both a higher degree of importance, and deeper interest in the estimation of the reader.

In the following observations, addressed to Marshal Beresford, he makes an allusion no less amusing than useful to the sort of officers whom he would have selected, instead of those chosen by the government for the better regulation and discipline of the Portuguese troops:—"The officers to be employed in this manner must have been the best the British service could afford, probably so like black swans, that the service could furnish very few of them; but fewer would have been required,

and the service of all would have been efficient; whereas I suspect that the service of many of those you have got is not worth the expence, and that as the Portuguese will have become acquainted with their ignorance and inefficiency, their respect for them will diminish."

Turning to Spanish affairs, with regard to resuming the offensive—a measure so complacently dwelt upon by the supreme junta and some persons almost as weak at home,—the following pertinent and somewhat sarcastic remarks show how well he had calculated the means at his disposal, and the chances of failure or success. "I believe it will be admitted that unless I undertake with 25,000 British troops to conquer Spain, I must either be satisfied with maintaining myself in Portugal as long as I can; or I must make up my mind to take upon my own shoulders the disgrace of the certain failure which must attend the military operations in Spain.

"You and I might make a very pretty little expedition into Castile, which we might concert with the military section of the junta, and we should have the promise of all the generals for their hearty co-operation. The French would then put 10,000 men at Almaraz, 5000 at Arzobispo, and 5000 at Toledo, which would effectually keep in check the Spanish army; and they would collect about 50,000 men in Castile to oppose us. There would thus be an end to this expedition."

And in regard to the promotion of officers in the Portuguese service, "it would be a curious circumstance," he observes, "if — were to say, "Now, that I am an Englishman, lieutenant-colonel and a Portuguese colonel, the Portuguese government shall not exercise the prerogative it has always exercised over the army, of making any gentlemen they pleased officers of any rank."

And again, with reference to approaching operations which, with his accustomed foresight, this able commander appears to have borne in mind, even while executing his retrograde movements towards Portugal, he informs Marshal Beresford that they ought to have at Villa Velha not a flying bridge but a

common one. "The only operation the French can undertake, which can do Portugal any permanent mischief, is the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo; and we must all move to prevent its success. The movement would be much accelerated by this bridge instead of the flying one; I should not be surprised if they undertook this operation, for they can really do nothing else." Of course the British general meant by the French being able to do nothing, nothing more effective than what he stated as related to making an attack upon Portugal.

Having for the present period relinquished the war in Spain as a hopeless undertaking, the attention of Lord Wellington was naturally directed to the advantages he had already gained, and to the best means for maintaining and securing the independence of Portugal. His first object was to establish his communications with the forces under Marshal Beresford and Sir Robert Wilson, and to obtain the services of the latter, should the Portuguese commander be enabled to make arrangements with him to that effect, as an advanced guard for covering the frontiers. In the defence of this country, which had witnessed some of his most fortunate and brilliant achievements, there was still ample scope for the display of his military genius and resources. He would no longer be shackled with the weight of chains which had bound down his active spirit to the earth, which had paralysed every effort and deprived him of all power of attempting active movements. Nay, the obstinacy and incapacity of one weak old man had been allowed by as weak a government to defeat the entire object of his expedition; and, when within his grasp, when he held the army of Victor at an advantage, and was ready for an instant attack, had sullenly refused all aid and co-operation; thus giving that general time to withdraw,—as if the Spaniard were more willing to blast the laurels of a brave ally than to strike the oppressors of his country. But here this disreputable system would be at an end; he could once more breathe and move, freed from the incubus of Spanish envy, discord and disaster,—from bonds which held him, like the fabled Mezentius, to drag along with him the dead carcass of

Spain's departed spirit, the dregs of her expired honour, strength, and glory.

From the moment the fatal connexion was broken, he seemed to enter into a new sphere; he recovered the elasticity with the fervour and firmness of his manly spirit,—born to command,—and no longer acting as an equal, or in subserviency to meaner intellects, with men every way his inferiors. The change is perceptible even in the tone of his letters and despatches, and he commences his new labours in conjunction with other colleagues,—officers whom he could understand, like Hill, Beresford, and Wilson,—with unabated hopes and energies, eager for duty and for action. In the correspondence that follows, it is gratifying to a biographer to perceive the laudable anxiety which he evinces to relieve, as far as possible, the pressure of the war upon the public burdens, by adapting his measures to the urgency of circumstances,—economising his force and concentrating his resources,—so as to incur no expense and no loss of power which he could possibly avoid, by superfluous action. It is the same with his language; how briefly and cogently do the following passages explain his views and proceedings with reference to existing circumstances, and the state and prospects of the war.* “I received your letter of the 24th, and, last night, that of the 28th. All your couriers have either gone or will go to you this day. I despatch one whenever I have anything material to say to you; but, when there is no alteration on my side the country, and none wished for on yours, I do not think it necessary or proper to put the public to the expense (no small one) of sending a courier. When you do not hear from me, you may depend upon it there is no alteration since the last letter.

“I omitted, in my letter of yesterday, to recommend you to keep your cavalry at Lisbon, or, at all events, somewhere upon the Tagus or the Mondego, where they could draw their supplies from the sea or from a distance. We must look to the opera-

* To Marshal Beresford, Merida, 30th August.

tions which we may have to carry on in the advanced season of the year, to the necessity which may exist of assembling large bodies of troops between the Mondego and the Tagus ; and we should take care of the resources in that part of the country, particularly the straw. I beg you, therefore, to keep your cavalry out of it; and, if you have occasion to move them through it, let it be in small bodies and by different routes."

In a letter to Mr. Huskisson with whom, as secretary of the treasury, Lord Wellington maintained a regular correspondence relating to that indispensable article so well designated as the sinews of war, and to the raising supplies by the negociation of bills in the foreign markets, the distribution of money and settling the accounts,—all which came under his active superintendance and arrangements with the commissaries,—we meet, at the close, with these remarkable words :—“ I wish that the eyes of the people of England were open to the real state of affairs in Spain as mine are ; and, I only hope, if they should not be so now, that they will not purchase the experience by the loss of an army. We have gained a victory which has proved to the French that they are not the first military nation in the world. But the want of common management in the Spaniards, and of the common assistance which every country gives to any army, and which this country gives most plentifully to the French, have deprived us of all the fruits of it.

“ The Spaniards have neither numbers nor efficiency,—they have no discipline, bravery, or management to carry on the contest ; and, if I could consent to remain in Spain, its burthen and the disgrace of its failure would fall upon me.”*

With regard to the interference of the government at home in the exchange of the precious metals with that of Portugal,—a subject with which the British general was as conversant as with the details of his own duties,—we meet with the following just and useful observations :†—“ I had hoped that I had at last

* To W. Huskisson, Esq., Merida, 30th August.

† To the Right Hon. John Villiers, Merida, 30th August.

settled the share which the Portuguese government were to have of all the supplies which we should receive ; but the government at home having interfered, as appears by the enclosed letters, we are as far from a settlement as ever.

"The object of this interference is certainly to prevail upon the Portuguese government to take this silver in bars for more than it is worth in the markets at Lisbon ; for, with all our grandeur, we are not above turning a penny in an honest way when we can.

"I shall write to Mr. Murray to desire that the silver in bars may be disposed of according to your orders ; and, I conclude, that it will defray all the demands on account of the Portuguese troops till the end of September, and, of course, that you will not have occasion to make any demands upon us till the beginning of November. However, you will let me know if I am mistaken on the subject. I had ordered the £15,000 to be paid immediately, but I shall now of course countermand that order.

"I do not know what can be done to Oporto. It appears to me that it cannot be defended excepting by an army in the field ; and whether the army should be assembled for the defence of that place only, or for the defence of any other part of Portugal, which may at the same time be threatened, must be a question to be determined by those who are to consider of the general defence of the country at the moment it is menaced. It is very obvious, however, that the lines at Oporto did more harm than good, and would do more harm than good again, if they were not to be defended by a good army.

"Those who are attached to Oporto, or to any other situation, may think that an army cannot be better employed than in the defence of that important city, or in that of the situation to which they are attached ; and may be of opinion that a portion of the army ought to be allotted to defend the lines which ought to be immediately constructed. But I cannot agree in these opinions ; and at all events, Beresford being in the command, must be consulted and give his opinion on this subject.

"A partisan like Baptiste may do a great deal of good, but if my memory does not fail me, Baptiste is the most useless of that description of persons. He was upon the frontiers of Portugal when I was in pursuit of Soult; and he certainly not only did nothing, but kept out of the way, although he might have done much. At all events, there is now no enemy upon the Portuguese frontier, particularly north of the Douro, the scene with which Baptiste is best acquainted."

Having formed his arrangements for the defence of Portugal, Lord Wellington, with equal promptitude reverted to the situation of the Spanish armies which in connexion with the security of that country, its own unhappy struggle and the interests of the general cause could not, much as he had suffered in his efforts to relieve it, be a subject of indifference to him. He considered the difficulties with which the Spanish government had to contend, of a nature not to be soon overcome. He strongly recommended them to increase the number of their forces, to raise supplies, and equip and discipline their troops before attempting any offensive operation; and in the mean time he suggested how the troops ought to be disposed of. He urged the importance of occupying a strong position in Extremadura, on the side of Portugal, the British army being necessarily the foundation of any active operations; and it was obvious that that position ought to be on the left of the whole, issuing from the frontiers. If the Spanish corps intended to act with the British army should be weak, their movements must be checked at an early period; and it would be impossible in that case for the large Spanish army carrying on its operations from La Carolina, and La Mancha, to attain its object. It was supposed that Soult entertained a design of attacking Ciudad Rodrigo, it having already been discussed and recommended in a council of war held some time before at Salamanca. The success of this enterprize would do more mischief than the French were capable of doing in any other manner. It would completely cut off the only communication the Spanish govern-

ment have with the northern provinces, give the French possession of Castile, and probably occasion the loss of the fort of Almeida.

Lord Wellington was desirous of making every exertion to save Ciudad Rodrigo; but, if Estremadura should be left with only 12,000 men, it was obvious that Seville, as well as Portugal, would be exposed, while the British were removed to another part of the country. He was apprehensive, also, that the central junta, in the distribution of their forces, would pay less attention to military objects than to political intrigue and the attainment of some trivial advantages. It would be necessary as well, in case of future co-operation with the Portuguese, to make more satisfactory arrangements for their support; they had, in fact, been worse treated than the British, and the resolution adopted by Lord Wellington was to allow neither to re-enter Spain, before some definite arrangements were made for supporting them. It was a curious circumstance relating to Marshal Beresford, that the Cabildo of Ciudad Rodrigo actually refused to allow him to have 30,000 out of 100,000lbs. of biscuit, left there by the British commander purposely for the troops which might happen to arrive, and for which his commissary had paid. The Cabildo received the money and then seized the biscuit, on the convenient doctrine,—then so prevalent in Spain,—that debts were due to the town by the British army under the command of the late Sir John Moore. Yet, will it be believed, that one of the objects of the mission of the said commissary to Ciudad Rodrigo, was to discharge those very debts. At the same time, this model of a Spanish magistrate would be the loudest to call for assistance on the first threat of the enemy, even while still holding possession of the means which, if lodged as directed in the stores of Almeida, might enable Lord Wellington effectually to provide for the relief of the fortresses.

Still actively providing for the future, this indefatigable commander next wrote to Sir R. Wilson,* to acquaint the

* Lobon, 2nd September, 1809.

Duque del Parque that he would make every effort to relieve the place if attacked, and to urge Sir Robert himself to maintain his position, watch the movements of the enemy, and convey early information of any change. He put him on his guard against Soult, who he clearly saw would attempt to drive Sir Robert from his ground; but he trusted to his disputing it with the French general, and also to his securing, for the service of the British, the boats at Villa Velha, by sending Colonel Grant with one battalion to accomplish this object. He was then to retire with the remainder of his troops towards Sarzedas, into the passes of the mountains.

On the 3rd of September, Lord Wellington reached Badajos, where he again wrote to Sir R. Wilson, modifying the directions he had before given, and addressed despatches to the British government, in which he stated that, in the existing state of the forces of the enemy and the allies in the Peninsula, it would be difficult for the British, if not impossible, to connect the defence of Portugal with that of Spain. For so extensive a plan, great improvements would require to be made in the mode of supplying the armies, and it would be absolutely necessary that the commander of the British troops should also have the command of the Spanish army; that there should be an English garrison at Cadiz, and that the most efficient measures should be adopted to secure supplies and means of transport for the allied armies. About the same time he replied to a communication from the Portuguese government, which had already appointed him a Captain General of the kingdom, and now conferred its thanks, in the name of the Prince and the nation, for the distinguished services he had conferred on them; and to which he replied in a manner which showed his high sense of the treatment he had experienced, and his gratitude for the hospitality and attention bestowed upon the British army.*

"I am infinitely obliged," he says, "to the government for their kindness to the troops; the whole army acknowledge the

* To Don Miguel Forjas, Badajos, 3rd September, 1809.

uniform good treatment they have received from the government and the people of Portugal, and I shall adopt some mode of acquainting the troops of the favour and good will of the governors of the kingdom towards them upon their return to Portugal; but I request the governors of the kingdom not to ask me to accept of the present which they have desired to make to the troops, which, at the same time that it would give a superfluity of provisions, would waste the resources of the country of which the army stand so much in need. With the permission of the governors of the kingdom, I will settle with General Leito the mode in which I shall convey to the troops the approbation of their good conduct by the governors of the kingdom, of which, I hope, their excellencies will approve."

Meantime, it appeared from an intercepted letter of Soult, that he had a serious design upon Ciudad Rodrigo, and Lord Wellington was fully prepared to move upon the covering army of that important city, in which case he expected that the enemy would follow him from the Tagus into Portugal, leaving a single corps to keep in check the Spanish army. He accordingly placed the right of the army at Talavera Real, Hill's division at Montijo and La Calzada, and the heavy brigade of cavalry at Merida, where they would be supplied with forage.

To General Craufurd he assigned a position at Campo Mayor, with a view to a general movement across the Tagus, to which he could look forward with confidence from the improved state of the financial and commissariat departments; and, after the deplorable details we have given, it is a singular and almost amusing fact,—one too of which few armies had ever reason to complain,—that there was more money with the army than they knew what to do with; and it was quite necessary to pay in ready money for every thing, in order to lighten so agreeable a burden.

The Spanish head-quarters were now at Truxillo, in consequence of finding it difficult to support an army in the exhausted country upon the left bank of the Tagus, and partly on account of orders received from the junta to detach a force to La Caro-

lina, leaving only 12,000 men in Estremadura. They still occupied La Mesa de Ibor and the Puerto de Mirabete opposite Almaraz,—the danger of both which points was pointed out by Lord Wellington,—while he strongly urged the government to make exertions to maintain their strong position upon the Tagus, though he fully expected that they would lose it, and the enemy not only possess himself of the Tagus, but, probably, of the Guadiana, nearly to the British position at Badajos.

Nor were his apprehensions unfounded ; notwithstanding the urgent entreaties he had employed to deter the Spanish armies from rushing into general engagements, they were proceeding from all points to the attack, as if bent upon their own destruction. Eguia, leaving the Duque de Albuquerque with 12,000 men on the Tagus, hastened to the support of Venegas who was already routed ; and, was soon afterwards, superseded by General Arrezagá, who, on the arrival of Eguia, found himself at the head of 50,000 men. Rash and inexperienced, he weakly imagined that no one of the French armies could oppose him ; equally sanguine, the troops clamoured to be led into battle ; and, filled with the vain boastings of their new general, talked only of bringing back the junta in triumph to hold its sittings in the capital. Advancing from the Sierra Morena into the plains of La Mancha, Arrezagá drew up at Ocano, in one of the most open positions, where he was attacked by Marshal Mortier, supported by the corps of Sebastiani, and defeated with fearful loss and slaughter. Nearly 20,000 prisoners, 10,000 slain, according to the French accounts, with a host of scattered fugitives, attested the extent of the disaster. Thus two of the best equipped Spanish armies were at one blow almost entirely annihilated ; and it was speedily followed by fresh reverses. The Duque del Parque, at the head of 20,000 men, was joined near Ciudad Rodrigo by Sir Robert Wilson, where they maintained a desultory war of posts. They were opposed to Marshal Ney, who, having taken offence at the appointment of Soult to the chief command, solicited and obtained his recal. Marchand, by whom he was replaced, holding the Spaniards in utter contempt, in-

stantly attacked them on the heights of Tomames, but was repulsed with considerable loss. The Spaniard, following the enemy, entered Salamanca, and so elated was he at his success and the applauses of the people, that, forgetting to improve his advantage, he gave the French time to rally and reinforce their numbers. He was compelled to retreat towards Alba de Tormes, where he was brought to an action on the morning of the 28th of November, and finally routed with great slaughter, being attacked on his retreat by a fresh body of cavalry. Casting away their arms, the troops fled in all directions into the mountains. By these two victories, Estremadura, and all the southern parts of Spain where Lord Wellington had been so desirous of strengthening the allied positions and avoiding general actions, lay open to the enemy, who could now threaten Portugal through the province of Beira.

Availing himself of the advantages thus unexpectedly obtained, King Joseph instantly placed himself at the head of the army under Soult, determined to overrun Andalusia. In communication with Victor, Mortier, and Sebastiani, each commanding separate armies, he moved towards the passes of the Sierra Morena. Here was gathered a host of fugitives from the recent battles, but, though numerous, they were in such a state of disorder and dismay, as to be unable to offer further opposition to so formidable an enemy. The strong passes were carried without the necessity of even halting the columns ; and, soon after the close of the disastrous year of 1809, the head quarters of the victorious foe were established in the town of Baylen.

CHAPTER IX.

(1810 to 1814.)

Plans of the British General—His exertions—Ill health—Spanish guerillas—Movements of the British army—Difficulties to contend with—Excellent measures for defence or attack—He annoys and delays the enemy—Proceedings of the opposition—Conduct of the government—Napoleon—Opinion of Lord Wellington—Buonaparte's system—His opinion of the British General—Operations of General Hill—Strange conspiracy—The French army—Progress of Massena—Fall of Ciudad Rodrigo—Measures of precaution—Portuguese authorities—Preparations for retreat.

THE series of disastrous events which ushered in the opening of the year 1810, and appeared to close every avenue of hope for the re-establishment of national independence throughout the Peninsula, did not, at the same time, take the British commander by surprise, or find him unprepared how to act. His mind had been long engaged in preparing plans for the future, and preparing even for the worst; while his arrangements were so admirably made with reference to the power of the enemy, that he could take advantage of events, and succour or act with our allies, whenever a fair occasion and reasonable prospects of success should render it prudent. Surrounded by difficulties and trammelled with responsibility as he was, he permitted nothing to interfere with the persevering ardour with which he embraced every subject, entered into its least details, availed himself of every resource, and became master of every kind of information which could tend to the success of the war. Neither his own ill health,—for he had now some time been suffering from a slow or remittent fever,—nor his disappointments and losses incurred by the faults of others, could induce him to

relax in his exertions ; and, having matured his plans relating to more immediate and pressing occurrences of the war, he was anxious to connect them with a system of defence, still more extended and deep grounded, which had recently occupied much of his time and thoughts. To develope and mature it, ere the anticipated ruin of the Spanish armies should bring down the combined strength of the French upon himself, he set out on the 8th of October to visit Lisbon and the vicinity, where he continued for a period of nearly three weeks. He took a particular survey of the adjacent country ; and, after personal examinations and practical observations with regard to all its capabilities for natural and artificial fortification, he fixed his eyes on the formidable heights of Torres Vedras. He already meditated the grand project of those impregnable lines, and was eager to apply it with his previous reasonings to the existing localities, and to the capabilities of the ground.

In less than three weeks he had completed all his calculations, and all the practical details of the subject, besides despatching a mass of other business,—maintaining an active correspondence, laying down plans, (even time, place, and circumstances,)—with reference to magazines and supplies, and pointing out to his general officers the movements and line of action they would have to adopt on the invasion of the enemy, whose motions and designs he penetrated, and was even enabled to direct them in their duties,—giving each the line he was to follow in his approaching famous retreat.

Before the end of October he was again with his army, better in health, full of animation and activity, and in communication on every side with the different corps and divisions, both of British and Portuguese, which were to make corresponding movements when the different armies of Napoleon,—now strongly reinforced and flushed with recent victories,—should bear down upon the frontiers.

With astonishing celerity, his comprehensive mind embraced every object connected with his future plans while it went through the minutest details ; and, on the 1st of November, he

again left his army at Badajos and repaired to Seville. He thence accompanied Lord Wellesley to Cadiz, on occasion of the departure of that nobleman for England, and the appointment of his brother, the Hon. Henry Wellesley, as ambassador to Spain. He had thus an opportunity of inspecting the works at Cadiz and on the isle of Leon, defended by the English and Portuguese under Sir William Stewart, and, subsequently, by General Graham. At the same time, he entered into arrangements equally necessary for the interests of Spain and Portugal, and for their common defence in conjunction with his own plans; and, about the middle of the month, again rejoined his army on the Guadiana.

The French army still continuing to receive reinforcements, the attention of Lord Wellington now became painfully directed to the immediate results of the contest. When called upon by the supreme junta and the different Spanish generals to resume the offensive, and unite with one or other of their armies in protecting the weaker and stemming the tide of French successes, he uniformly replied by showing that his interference, under the circumstances of the war, would not only prove actually injurious with regard to the purposes they proposed, but must assuredly bring destruction upon the British army, upon Portugal, and upon the last hopes of the common cause. At the same time, so anxious was he to support and protract the war in Spain, that, from the period of retiring from Talavera, he had his eye upon every movement of the campaign; he anticipated the objects of the enemy, he forewarned,—he advised the Spanish generals how to foil or defeat the objects of that enemy,—not by open battles, but by covering with their armies the operations of the guerilla warfare throughout the country, holding their large forces aloof in strong impregnable positions, like their ancestors in their first conquests of the Moors,—always on the alert to follow up, by striking decisive blows, the earliest successes of the guerillas.

But, although his admirable directions were thrown away upon the weak ambition of the junta, and the sanguine tempera-

ment of the chiefs and soldiers of the Spanish armies, he had the satisfaction, as he well knew must be the result, of beholding them, at length, driven by necessity to adopt the very measures he had so strenuously urged, while their armies remained yet entire, and occupied the attention of the French armies,—and there were other causes for this.

The effect of being frequently brought into contact with death, at once wearies and appals the mind of the stoutest soldier. It is a fact, well noted by ancient no less than modern commanders, that, after long and arduous service, the veteran shrinks with disgust from the repetition of the sanguinary work, as if cloyed with destruction,—whereas the soldiers, younger in point of service, rush readily and even gaily into the battle.* If we add to the almost continual contact with death, the disheartening influence of almost certain defeat, with all its terrors of shame, flight, and slaughter, we may form some idea of the feelings with which Spanish soldiers met the armed and disciplined legions of Napoleon in the open plains, and of the causes of those sudden panics which led to the very consequences they were intended to avoid. Bitter experience with continual defeats, sufferings, and disasters, at last drove the main bodies themselves, scattered and confused, into their native hills, where, joining the small parties already put in motion, or forming separate bands, the guerilla system daily assumed a more formidable attitude. Thus, after having routed the Spaniards at all points in the open field, the enemy found there were still armies of the mountains more difficult to reach, and, when found, to be fought under every disadvantage to the

* We well remember hearing a brave officer of a very distinguished British regiment observe, upon an occasion when the corps had behaved nobly and as usual sustained a heavy loss, "it is almost time that our old hands should be sent home; they have had too much of this; they were as steady as usual but not in such good humour as the men who last came out,—a few more such victories would sicken them."—*Sherer's Military Memoirs*. There is an observation, also, of a similar purport in the excellent work of the historian Napier, who, in speaking of the French under Soult, and their weariness and discontent, says, that "the mind shrinks from perpetual contact with death."

invaders. That this was the species of force calculated for the defence of the country, we learn from the description of what the Spaniards termed armies,* by one of their commanders—the Duke of Albuquerque when accompanying the army of Cuesta in its early campaigns. “On our marches,” it is observed, “we stop to repose like a flock of sheep, without taking up any position, and again we march as if we were on a pilgrimage, without any regard to distance, order, or method.” On the contrary, the guerillas could collect under chosen leaders, acquainted with all the advantages of the ground on which they were to act in small bands, so disposed as to act separately or in concert with others,—to surprise the unfortunate straggler,—a few scattered troops,—a convoy,—and even to hover round and alarm the French camps,—sometimes the head quarters and the garrison of the capital themselves.

This was, indeed, a formidable system; and, supported by the good will,—the enthusiasm of the people, or, at least, the great majority in all parts,—while the British army on the frontiers continued unbroken and prepared when the moment came to resume active operations,—kept the French in continual alarm, and disturbed all the plans and calculations of Napoleon himself. The war became more sanguinary in detail than when conducted on a general scale; the French, in ostensible possession of the country, with no armies to oppose them, found themselves opposed to individuals,—to a whole nation supported by innumerable bands of mountaineers, led by the most brave and skilful, elected in every village and community, as ready to surprise and fall upon them in their guarded as in their unguarded moments. In the camp, in the market place, or on the march, and in every transaction of ordinary life, they stood among those who had marked them out for a bloody prey. The peasant, whom they saw peaceably employed in the field, had his gun and his knife secretly prepared to bring down his

* Words made use of by Sir John Moore.

victim when his back was turned. At the well-known summons he left his plough, joined the nearest partisans, and lay in ambush, or rushed boldly from the hills to surprise some convoy, some detachment, some less wary individuals or parties of the enemy. There was not a pass among the hills where some fierce band, headed by a Mina, a Porlier, a Juan Martin, El Empecinado, and numerous others designated by their profession or office,—the curate, the physician, the barber, the innkeeper,—were not one or all eager to lure into their toils to betray, to cut off those French spoilers whom they had learned to hate with a bitterness at once personal and national, and to sacrifice them as victims well pleasing in the eyes of heaven.

Among the chiefs of these partidas ranked the two Minas and Renovales in Navarre and Aragon ; the Marquisetto and Lanza in the Asturias and Biscay ; Juan Paladea in La Mancha ; the curate Merino in Castile ; the friar Sapia, of Soria, Juan Abril, of Segovia, the doctor Rovera, in Catalonia ; Julian Sanchez, near Salamanca ; with others, formerly men of peaceable habits and pursuits ; while not a few tradesmen, students, and even women, aided in the same wild and terrific system of warfare. It was computed that there were, about this period, little fewer than 50,000 of these irregular troops or partisans scattered through the mountainous regions, employed not merely in carrying on a desultory war in their strong holds, but becoming more daring by numbers and success,—coming to a war of posts, attacking divisions on their march, and extending their ravages in every conceivable mode against the strength and resources of the enemy.

Affairs in the British camp now began to assume a better appearance, clothing for the British regiments and supplies were more abundant, the weather became more salubrious, and the hospitals were no longer filled as they had been with nearly one third of the entire army. That species of intermittent fever, arising from the privation of food, added to the autumnal fogs and damps, from which their commander had himself so much suffered, disappeared from among the troops ; the convalescents

again began to fill the ranks, and the men were enabled to perform their duty.

Previous to breaking up his present cantonments, Lord Wellington was almost incessantly engaged in his tent, except the brief intervals which he allowed himself from his arduous mental toils for air and exercise, and which he usually spent in the animating sports of the field. Here he had "ample room and scope enough" in the splendid Park of Villa Viçosa, one of the hunting palaces of the Portuguese kings. During these temporary relaxations from the thoughts and cares that thronged his ardent mind, he appeared invariably cheerful and good humoured with all around him ; and, on one fine day, so far prolonged the chase, as to enumerate among his sylvan spoils a wild boar and twenty-five head of deer.

But a new subject of anxiety, which called his earnest attention, now arose from the proceedings of the Spanish junta, subsequent to the late disastrous defeats. Though aware that the whole of Andalusia was in peril, instead of securing the steep and rugged defiles by which to command its approach, they seemed solicitous only to consult their personal safety and the preservation of their property. So far from having recourse to active measures, adopting the excellent suggestions of the British commander, and strengthening their force upon the Tagus, they contented themselves with issuing decrees and proclamations, to revive that energy and enthusiasm which they had so grievously betrayed and misapplied. They adopted no means to reorganise their routed armies, or even to strengthen that under Albuquerque, notwithstanding that it was the only one left unbroken, and on which reliance could be placed. They directed it to be employed in the most useless and perilous operations, and to the urgent entreaties for supplies, they paid the same attention they had before done to those of the British general. At the same time, they took care to pass a resolution by which they declared that, for the future, it would be more convenient that they should hold their sittings in the Isle of Leon, (defended by English and Portuguese troops,) and that, on the

1st of February, the members should there assemble for the despatch of business. The reputation of the junta, long on the wane, received a heavy blow by this imprudent step; and the idea that the people were about to be abandoned by their rulers, excited the utmost alarm and indignation among the people both throughout the country and in Seville.

This spirit began to manifest itself in the usual form—the turbulence and ferocity of the populace; but it was repress until the hour for action had arrived. The members having made their arrangements, proceeded, in accordance with their own decree, quietly to withdraw; when, on reaching the barriers, they were one and all arrested. Amidst cries and vociferations, it was counter-decreed that Seville should be defended to the last, that the post of danger should be filled by the president of the junta himself, Don Francisco Saavedra, at that time also minister of finance, as if they conceived that he, who ought to be best provided with "the sinews of war," was the fittest person to place in the breach.

A scene that baffles all description now ensued; and, in order to allay the storm, the President readily consented to assume the honour thus unceremoniously thrust upon him. His real object, however, was to secure his own escape by creating a confidence in the minds of the citizens, which both he and his colleagues meant to betray.

On the first occasion that offered, the new commander-in-chief and financier in one, having only one person to consult, took his own counsel and fled,—as quickly followed by his brave colleagues, who seemed to have a great respect for the Hudibrastic opinion of running to reserve themselves for battle another day. The people likewise sought to lay hands upon General Romana, but, having work prepared for him elsewhere, he also contrived to escape and retired to Badajos, while Seville was left, abandoned by its defenders, or magistrates of any class, to make its own terms with the conqueror. Accordingly, having had time to reflect, this patriotic city,—before so ardent in the cause,—chose the better part of valour, and, with laudable dis-

cretion, received King Joseph not merely without resistance, but with every demonstration of satisfaction.

Upon the 15th of December, 1809, Lord Wellington had broken up from his cantonments on the Guadiana, and led part of his army into the vicinity of the Coa, leaving the corps of General Hill in observation along the Alemtejo. On the 27th he left Badajos for Gafete; the next day was at Gaviao, where he continued engaged in new arrangements, and dictating his despatches, till the 29th, and, on the 2d of January, was at Pombal. In his letter from that place, addressed to Colonel Alava, he mentioned the prevailing report, that it was the intention of Napoleon to follow the new reinforcements sent into Spain in person; and he adds that 200,000 men were to march for the same destination under Berthier; that in the Emperor's speech to the Senate he no longer speaks of "the conquest of Spain," but "of wise and moderate measures;" "and it is my opinion," concluded the sagacious general, "that he will not come here for that purpose."*

In writing from the same place to the Hon. Mr. Villiers,† he alludes to some of the difficulties with which he had to contend in regard to the supplies necessary for the British and Portuguese troops, and makes the following interesting communication:—"I have not seen the commissary-general since I received your letter, nor shall I see him till I shall be at Coimbra to-morrow; but I know that he can give the Portuguese troops provisions only in the way in which he can give them money, by depriving the British troops of them.

"I believe there never was any officer, but certainly never a British officer, placed in so difficult a situation as I am in. Every body looks for British assistance in everything; money, stores, provisions, and all that keep an army together are required by both Spaniards and Portuguese; and they and the British nation, and even the Government, conceive that *I*

* Pombal, 2d January, 1810.

† Same date.

have all at my command, and that I have only to say the *word* to supply all their wants, and satisfy all their demands. The fact is, however, that I have not more than enough for my own army, and I *have* received the order of the government to give nothing.

"I can suggest no means of procuring the money required to keep the armies together, excepting that government should send money out. I have told them so repeatedly, and I have lately requested Lord Liverpool to send out 200,000*l.* God knows whether it will arrive or not !

"You see the dash which the Common Council of the city of London have made at me ! I act with a sword hanging over me, which will fall upon me whatever may be the result of affairs here : but they may do what they please ; I shall not give up the game here as long as it can be played."

It thus appears that, although well aware of the extent of the responsibilities he was incurring, Lord Wellington had also confidence in his own resources, and in the spirit of the army which he commanded. So far from allowing the clamours of party, and the bitter attacks made upon him by men from whom he had a right to expect better, if not more dignified conduct, to ruffle his equanimity, or deprive him of his usual elasticity of mind, they had the effect only, as in all noble minds, of calling forth fresh energy and resolution. Of this trait, so remarkable in him throughout his whole career, we have an amusing instance soon afterwards in a letter to his friend Colonel Alava,* on the subject of recommending a young officer as an aide-de-camp :— "Pray tell him at the same time, in recommending the son of Payno to the Duke of Albuquerque, that I always consider the recommendation of an officer to a general to take him for an aide-de-camp, very much the same thing as to take on oneself to recommend a lady to any gentleman with a view of making her his wife."

"I am happy to learn that the Marquis de la Romana has left the junta."

* Dated Viseu, January 23, 1810.

The preparations of the French commander-in-chief had now assumed a more tangible and threatening aspect; and, as Lord Wellington had long anticipated, Ciudad Rodrigo, upon the frontiers, was one of the first objects that engaged Soult's attention. If that fell, the important fortress of Almeida might speedily share the same fate. These he was prepared to defend; but for Spain the die was cast; he could not accomplish impossibilities, and all the efforts of the British general were now directed to the ultimate preservation of Portugal. While his army, therefore, was engaged in crossing the Tagus, and marching towards the new line marked out for it, Lord Wellington again repaired to Lisbon; where he made another *reconnoissance* of the last grand position on which he meant to retire, when every other should fail; and issued orders for the more rapid completion of the works. He repeatedly inspected the main points selected for defence—marked out the extent and outline—and directing a corresponding strength of art to render these natural barriers of the capital impregnable, he entrusted the details of the plan to Colonel Fletcher, a very skilful and assiduous officer,—well experienced in all branches of fortification,—and returned to his head-quarters at Viseu.

Arrangements were now made with the British admiral off the Tagus for the embarkation of the baggage, and, if the necessity should arise for that of the troops, both British and Portuguese—so provident and far-sighted were the views of one who, whether in the full tide of success, or acting upon the defensive, was always prepared for the worst. It is remarkable to observe, at this period, the extent of his exertions, the astonishing activity of his mind, the prompt measures, the rapid despatch of business, the voluminous correspondence; as if gifted with the power of ubiquity, his eye was every where; his intellect pervaded every department, and he stood, with his defensive system fully developed, ready to receive the shock of his imperious foe.

And it was now too he found the advantage of having pre-

served his army, of having taken early precautionary measures on every line of his retreat ; and refusing to risk his last stake in the wild project of marching to support the Spanish armies in their mad career, and making a dash at the capital, as if he could liberate Spain by a single blow. Reproached and loaded with calumnies as he had been, the hour was now come when, animated with the consciousness of having performed his arduous duty,—of having done every thing—as far as circumstances permitted—for the best, he could reply to his enemies by his deeds, and show, by their results, the value of the system he had adopted, in his vast impregnable fortress of Torres Vedras. Indeed, from the brief period of the battle of Talavera, he may be said to have converted Portugal itself into one great fortress ; and, already, events thickened fast around him, and the storm of war was ready to burst upon his head.

Again the imperial legions, with the conqueror of Europe and his greatest generals at their head, fresh from conquest, crowned the heights of the Pyrenees, from which the eagles of France looked down upon their trembling prey. Spain lay prostrate at the conqueror's feet ; in the east and north, as before in the south, his armies had proved equally victorious. Girona fell, after enduring the miseries of a protracted siege, and the army of Blake, destroyed by successive defeats, consisted only of a few stragglers dispersed through the hills, leaving the towns and strong places of Catalonia in the hands of the enemy. In the north, Astorga, after a gallant resistance, shared the fate of other towns ; Seville too had fallen ; the entire surface of the country, as well as its fortresses, owned the sway of the new monarch ; and Cadiz alone fought gallantly on, though almost in its death-struggle, defended by British bayonets, and a British fleet.

The invasion of Portugal, therefore, was now the only subject which filled men's minds. Reinforcements were poured in from Bayonne in vast numbers ; and Marshal Massena was reported to be on his way from the Danube to assume the chief command. The submission of Austria gave a still more

dark and ominous aspect to the war; for Napoleon had declared before his senate that he would complete the conquest of the Peninsula; and no one doubted that the whole strength of his mighty empire would henceforth be directed to this single object. The fatal battle of Wagram seemed to have decided the fate of Germany, and Spain and Portugal, with England for their sole ally, remained the last and only obstacle to the imperial dominion of Napoleon over Europe and the world.

The advance of the British army under General Craufurd had now taken post in front of Almeida, its patroles extending as far as Ciudad Rodrigo, whilst General Hill, with one division, continued on the south of the Tagus to watch the motions of the enemy on the side of Badajos, and in case they threatened Lisbon through the Alemtejo. The head-quarters, first at Viseu, were subsequently removed to Celorico; the cavalry was cantoned at Abrantes, Santarem, and Thomar; and the park of artillery was established at Viseu. The French, in their first movements, threatened the southern frontier of Merida; and although Romana was in Badajos, and Elvas contained a respectable garrison, Lord Wellington knew that neither would be sufficient to arrest the progress of the enemy under Mortier and Regnier, should they press their advance in this direction upon Lisbon. General Hill had accordingly taken up a strong position at Abrantes—perfectly secure as long as the river should remain full; and with his advance at Portalegre, he frequently marched to Campo Mayor, with a view to command the road, and cover Badajos whenever it was threatened to be attacked in force.

Thus circumstanced on both sides, there was a good deal of skirmishing and manœuvring; Mortier very frequently advancing as if about to make a serious attack, which kept the British on the alert; but no sooner did General Hill appear in force, than the French general retired to his former positions. It was the object of Lord Wellington as long as possible to hold the enemy in check, and obtain delay in order to put the

regular army and the militia of Portugal into a better state of discipline and efficiency. He had already been reinforced with several British regiments, and by the activity and perseverance of General Beresford, Lord Wellington saw himself at the head of 31,000 Portuguese troops, well disciplined and equipped, and 27,000 British. The fortress of Almeida, garrisoned by 5000 men, under the command of General Cox, would, it was expected, retard the progress of the French, even in case they obtained possession of Ciudad Rodrigo, the garrison and inhabitants of which declared, like those of Saragossa and Girona, that they would bury themselves under its ruins before they would yield it up. But, however brave, and sometimes desperate in defending their cities, promises such as these, before the place was invested, could not be relied upon, and the British commander had accordingly adopted measures to relieve it; and in case of failure, to maintain his ground upon the next line, prepared, as he was, either for aggression or retreat.

During some period, the enemy still collecting in masses round the frontiers, appeared to pause before they commenced a regular attack. Aware of the strength of the fortified positions of the foe—that the main approaches through Beira were carefully guarded and watched—that, by his skilful dispositions, the English general had complete command of Guarda, long before held by Lord Galway as the only defensible line between the frontier and Lisbon—that, besides the support of the British, there were the fortresses, the army, the militia, the entire people of Portugal to encounter. Massena still hesitated to advance. It was evident that Napoleon considered the conquest of Portugal, with Spain but half subdued in his rear, as no light undertaking. He had raised to the chief command a new general, celebrated for his military genius, his skilful manœuvres, his able tactics in wielding a large force, and his almost invariable good fortune.

On his arrival Massena beheld the British crowning the lofty ridges, and placed along the descent of the Sierra de

Estrella—a range of hills which extends from Coimbra to Guarda, and ends at last in the extensive plains of Castile. Thus all approach was cut off by the two great roads which run to the north and south of the Sierra, and which are passable for an army moving with its *materiel* of stores and guns. The advanced posts were placed beyond Almeida, protected by the rivers Agueda and Coa, both formidable in winter from their depth and the rapid current, and in summer almost impassable, owing to the steepness and acclivity of the banks.

Their right, protected by the Tagus, which was rendered safe by the presence of General Hill's corps at Abrantes, was strongly supported; and the left could be threatened only on the side of Oporto, where there was no reason to apprehend any attack. So long as the river should continue swollen, as it was, and as it remained for an unprecedented long season, during that spring, there was little fear of too early a campaign; a circumstance that favoured the views of the British commander, and enabled him either to retreat or advance, according as events might require.

By a royal decree, dated Rio Janeiro, in July 1809, and published about the close of the year, at Lisbon, Lord Wellington had been appointed Marshal-general of the forces of Portugal. The regency was directed to invite him to preside at its sittings, to receive and to supply every information it could, and to consult him with regard to all national measures. Thus invested with supreme military authority and considerable influence in civil affairs, it was not long before both were felt in a manner which augured well for the future interests of the country. With a mind above all party-feeling or prejudices, there was a manly sense, integrity, and boldness of decision in his opinions, which gave them double weight. Aware of the high responsibility of the trust reposed in him by the court, he was most cautious never to give his advice or interfere without mature consideration, when he had some useful or important point to carry. By his moderation and wisdom he obtained the confidence of the council no less than

of the army and the people of Portugal. The suggestions he offered were received not only with becoming attention, but in a fair and friendly spirit, which most frequently led to their adoption. With regard to the people, notwithstanding the ill-conduct of the British soldiery, the gross outrages, insults, and even plunder, of which the worst portion of them, not excepting some of the officers, were guilty, their commander, by his strict sense of justice, his speedy punishments and redress, soon won their good-will and respect; they did justice to his high qualities, to his frank and noble disposition, opposed to every thing that was mean or cruel. Incapable of base motives, he turned with natural disgust and contempt from the proffered bribe, from avarice, plunder, and mere lust of power; while he sought, both by precept and example, to temper the evil passions, and to diminish the horrors and atrocities incident to all wars.

The improved health and discipline of the British army, and the more efficient state of the Portuguese troops, of whom, as the commander-in-chief, he had now also the supreme direction, with an excellent practical lieutenant and disciplinarian in Marshal Beresford, were sources of the greatest satisfaction to his mind at this eventful period. Having achieved so much, he next ventured to attack the enormous abuses which had so long prevailed in the commissariat department—the same which had proved so fertile a source of mischief in Spain, which had interwoven themselves into the national system, supported by the worst kind of interest and chicanery of every sort; yet, by employing his influence with the council, and as commander-in-chief, aided by close and persevering attention, he succeeded in rooting out many of the most flagrant evils and sources of corruption, and, by tracing them to the fountain-head, others were modified or diminished.

In effecting these reforms, both military and civil, his manners and deportment were not without their influence; his patience, his good humour, and his imperturbable calmness, doing more than could have been done by exciting feelings of irritation, or proceeding to violent and compulsory measures. In this respect he is said to have offered a singular contrast to

Marshal Beresford, better fitted perhaps for the instrument of those military reforms which require the ruder stamp of outward power,—the bold overbearing tone, the imperious will, and a desire of inspiring respect by awe and terror. But seldom were two men better adapted to act together, and accomplish the object they had in view of regenerating the military spirit of Portugal, when respectively filling the legislative and executive duties they had to perform, and which they discharged with so much honour and success.

On again visiting Lisbon at the close of January, Lord Wellington left specific directions for the movements of the troops, during his brief absence to inspect the lines of Torres Vedras, and consult with the regency. In one of his letters, to Major-general Cole,* he gives the following instructions :—“ I wish to state in writing what I before told you in conversation, when I saw you at Guarda. I do not wish to lose possession of the Coa, although I do not mean to contend for it, if the enemy should collect a large force, evidently with the intention of making a serious invasion of Portugal. If that should be the case, and you should deem it necessary, you will in concert with General Craufurd, withdraw from the Coa and collect your division and the hussars from Guarda, Trancoso, &c., to Celorico, where also, in the case of necessity supposed, you will find General Craufurd’s division. If the same necessity should continue to exist, as I do not mean to defend the Mondego at Celorico, I should wish the troops to fall back gradually upon Pinhanços, where Sir J. Sherbrooke will be, in the case supposed, with his division and other troops.

“ I conclude that you have posts upon the upper Coa, at Castello Bom, at Ponte de Sequeiros, at Rapoula de Coa, and also at Alfayates, in consequence of my last letter.”

In an interesting memorandum, likewise left with General Sherbrooke, and dated from Viseu, we observe how carefully this great commander noted down his thoughts and least suggestions with reference to the great object he had in view.

"The object of the position at present occupied by the army is, first, to defend the entrance into Portugal at the probable point of attack by the enemy.

"Secondly, to be in the situation to act offensively for the relief of Ciudad Rodrigo, if the enemy should make an attack upon that place, and it should be deemed expedient to make any movement for its relief. Thirdly, to be in the situation to act offensively upon a more extensive scale in Castile, by way of diversion for the allies, if the relative state of the forces of the enemy and of the allies should permit such an operation without risk to the British army.

"The third division at Pinhel, occupies the lower part of the Coa, and the cavalry have posts of observation even upon the Agueda

"If the enemy should continue to advance, General Cole and General Craufurd will retire gradually by the valley of the Mondego, as will General Sherbrooke, till the whole shall assemble at Da Murcella, holding the height of Moita as an advanced post.

"When General Sherbrooke shall make his movement across the Mondego, he is to send orders to the Portuguese troops at Coimbra to march to Ponte da Murcella, or to the villages in the rear of the Serra de Saboga ; to General Blunt at Figueira, to march his brigade to Coimbra, and thence to Mealhada, if there should be a road, from whence he is to occupy the pass between Mealhada and Martagon, near the convent of Busaco ; to the Portuguese troops at Leyria to move up to Ponte da Murcella.

"General Blunt must have with him a Portuguese brigade of artillery from Condeixa, and the remainder of the Portuguese artillery must be ordered to the Ponte da Murcella.

"The six and nine pounders in the British reserve-artillery must be embarked in boats on the Mondego at Coimbra, and sent up to Foz d'Alva, and the horses will move direct to Ponte da Murcella.

"General Bacellar must be directed to order all the boats

on the Mondego to go below Foz d'Alva ; to have all the bridges on the Mondego broken up, namely, between Fornos and Junçal, Ponte Novo ; near Villa Franca, Ponte de Cabra, Ponte de Palheiros, Ponte Novo ; near Carvalhal, Ponte de Feaes ; and to order out and collect the militia and the ordenanza, to move the former across the Criz, and to employ the latter in annoying the enemy in every situation in which it may be practicable ; to destroy the bridge near Fail, over the Viseu ; also the Ponte Pedrinha, over the river d'Asno, and that at Ferreroz over the same river.

“ He should likewise direct the owners of carts and carriages in the country evacuated, of which he has the list, and the inhabitants to move off with their property towards Oporto . . .

“ There is a brigade of Portuguese infantry at present at Lamego, under the command of Colonel McMahon, which, however, were to be moved farther to the rear, and I do not recollect to what station. If they should not be moved before the necessity of collecting the army should occur, they must march from Lamego, by Viseu, to the Ponte de Feaes, on the Mondego, where they will cross that river, and they are to be in the rear of General Sherbrooke's division at Pinhanges. If they should have marched, they must receive directions in the case supposed, to proceed, by Coimbra, to the villages in the rear of the Serra de Saboga. Colonel McMahon is directed to let General Sherbrooke know when he shall receive orders to march, and to what point.”

These extracts are extremely valuable, as illustrating some of those military qualities so remarkable in the subject of these memoirs—as showing how closely he calculated the enemy's movements, the steps necessary to be adopted, and the minutest details connected with the state and progress of the campaign. In the same manner he instructed General Hill, when the enemy passed the Tagus, or penetrated the mountains, to station a body of cavalry at Montalvao ; to maintain the bridge at Villa Velha ; to destroy the boats in case of necessity, and to write if any change should occur—enclosing, at

the same time, his route—during Lord Wellington's temporary absence at Torres Vedras.

And while thus anxious that no possible occurrence, at any point, should find him unprepared, he was equally cautious in regard to his proceedings with the British government, that there might be a perfect understanding in what sense, and how far the responsibility of his situation attached, that he might receive instructions on the line to be adopted in Portugal, in a state of affairs such as would most probably exist. He considered that, though the Spanish armies might be lost, the juntas and authorities of the provinces dispersed, and the French obtain possession of all the towns and fortresses, the war of partisans might still continue. Cadiz might, possibly, hold out, and the central junta, though without authority, still exist in that town. Portugal would still remain untouched, the enemy having evidently preferred the line of operations by the left of the Peninsula to that by the right, which Lord Wellington had supposed in his letter of the 14th of November, that he would be likely to adopt.

The government had been fully informed of the military situation and resources of Portugal. If arms could be supplied for the militia, there was no doubt that there would be not less than a force of 90,000 men regularly organized, besides the whole armed population of the country and the British army. Much remained to be done to render the Portuguese force equal to a contest with the enemy; however well-organized, experience and confidence, both in the soldiers themselves and in their officers, would still be wanting. There was no doubt of their general detestation of the French, of their loyalty to their Prince, of their confidence in the British commander and in his army, and of their determination to do their utmost in the cause. "Adverting then," he says, "to the probability, in the case supposed likely to exist, that the whole, or the greater part of the French army in Spain will be disposable to be thrown upon this country, I should be glad to know whether it is the wish of His Majesty's government that an effort

should be made to defend this country to the last; or whether, as soon as I shall find affairs in Spain in the state in which I have above described, I shall turn my mind seriously to the evacuation of the country, and to the embarkation of as large a body of people, military as well as others, as I can carry away.

"Whatever may be the decision of the government upon this subject, and whatever may be the force with which the enemy shall invade Portugal, I am of opinion that, in all events, I shall be able to bring away the British army."*

With a man who could thus clearly see, and boldly steer his own course, there could be no fear of compromising either the interest or the honour of Great Britain, nor, with regard to himself, the reputation he had so deservedly acquired. The government decided upon the plan of defending the country of its ally so long as it was practicable, and justly placed the most unreserved confidence in the caution, the conduct, and the mental resources—already so successfully displayed—of the commander whom they had chosen. Meantime, the situation of affairs in Spain assumed the threatening attitude which Lord Wellington had declared would soon happen; and it was only when the entire country fell into the possession of the French, and was parcelled out like a French province, that the juntas and authorities were roused from their dream of security, their dictatorial tone, and vain-presuming folly. The chastening rod of adversity applied by the hand of Napoleon was not exercised wholly in vain; by sharp and constant repetition of the same misfortunes and disasters, they became, at length, humbled and terrified, and their fear and humility proved with them, as with the unbeliever, the beginning of wisdom; though they had before refused to listen to her voice—"charmed she never so wisely." All that Lord Wellington had ever expected or required from them, they now willingly tendered at the eleventh hour—a conciliatory spirit and confi-

* To the Earl of Liverpool, Viseu, January, 1810.

dence in the British government. The new regency was composed of persons of integrity, experienced in business, thoroughly acquainted with the existing situation of affairs in Spain, and possessing the confidence of the people. The only apprehension was, that they had been called to the government at too late a period to effect much good, but they were disposed to do every thing in their power. The spirit of the nation, however, continued good, and the partisans were in all directions active, and on the alert; the Portuguese had altogether assumed a bolder attitude, under the discipline and example of the British;—so that, notwithstanding the tremendous power of the enemy, there were many redeeming features in the cause which, least of all, permitted a mind like that of Wellington's to despair.

Before entering, however, on the approaching campaign, it will be useful, as well as pleasing to the reader, to take a slight retrospect of the movements of a general who, already celebrated for his daring and successful attack, and the skill with which he conducted his retreat, was now employing all the resources of his comprehensive intellect and talent, with unremitting toil and assiduity, to maintain, at fearful odds, a system of defensive warfare to which his previous fortunes had little accustomed him. He continued for some period engaged in the completion of his famous lines, having arrived, by way of Leyria and Obidos, at Torres Vedras on the 5th of February, 1810, and thence proceeded through Mafra to Lisbon, where he remained only a day or two; reached Villa Franca on the 10th, and Santarem on the 12th. At the latter place he heard of the arrival of the enemy at Zafra, and of a detachment having, as was reported, taken possession of Olivença. On the 14th he was at Thomar, where the Portuguese forces and part of the British cavalry had been stationed; and he thence wrote to General Hill, giving him minute directions to attend to the movements of any corps north of the Tagus to Castello Branco, and to the bridge of Villa Velha. In one passage of his letter, which shows the exactness with which he considered

the details of every affair, he says, "Take the artificers of the regiments with you; and tell the magistrates of Abrantes that I hold them responsible, not only that you, but that Captain Patton shall have all the carts that may be required. Your regular supply, however, depends upon the regularity of Mr. —, and upon his acts, and not upon his talking.

"Do not forget to send the convalescents, artillery, horse and foot, from Elvas, Estremoz, &c., as fast as they shall recover."

He thence also wrote to Marshal Beresford, informing him that, in consequence of events at Badajoz, Hill was about to move forward with his whole corps. He expressed his anxiety respecting the line of the Zézere, desiring him to order out immediately the regiments of militia allotted for that service; to despatch the 13th regiment to Thomar, and General Widerholz to his station.

Upon the 15th Lord Wellington was at Espinhal, and by the 18th of the same month had returned to his head-quarters at Viseu. Ney's march upon Ciudad Rodrigo, the movement upon Badajos from the south, and of Soult on Placencia, although without any determinate objects, sufficiently showed at the time that serious operations were contemplated, and, like the dark specks on the sky, foretold the near approach of a heavier storm. The three corps of Ney and Kellermann in Castile, and Soult, who had joined them from Talavera, did not amount to less than 40,000 men, without including the numerous reinforcements, with Massena at their head.

Yet it is a singular fact that, with ample evidence of so great a force being arrayed against them, and with most bitter experience of its power, the Spanish Junta and its generals, driven to their last asylum in the isle of Leon, were at this period gravely contemplating offensive movements against the enemy, although the Regency, as we have observed, with the people and their partisans in the hills, were actuated by humbler and wiser views. How just, then, are the following remarks upon the character of the Spaniards, and on that of their proceedings

from the outbreak of the revolution :—“ The misfortune throughout the war has been that the Spaniards are of a disposition too sanguine. They have invariably expected only success in objects for the attainment of which they had adopted no measures. They have never looked to, nor prepared for a lengthened contest ; and all those, or nearly all, who have had any thing to do with them, have imbibed the same spirit and the same sentiments.

“ Without adverting to the enormous armies which are daily pouring into Spain, in addition to those which were before in the country, and were already superior in number to the allies ; or to the fact that there is now no army in the field excepting the British army, they are thinking of offensive operations from Cadiz ; and they appear to me to hold the Isla de Leon more as the intrenched camp (and hardly even deserving that name) of an army, than as a fortified post, upon the possession of which every thing is to turn in future.

“ I agree entirely with O'Farrell that if the Isla de Leon is lost, the town of Cadiz will not, and probably cannot, hold out a week. The Spaniards and we should deceive ourselves if we could suppose that a most serious attack will not, sooner or later, be made upon this island, or upon the communication between the island and Cadiz, and which it would be in vain to expect to resist, without having recourse to all the measures for the defence of these points which art can suggest. It is impossible to say whether the enemy will begin by making this great attack upon Cadiz, or will turn their attention to our situation in Portugal ; but, sooner or later, all that force or art can do to obtain possession of the Isla de Leon will be done ; and these efforts can be successfully resisted only by the adoption of similar measures.

“ I would, therefore suggest to you to get Captain Landmann to examine particularly the Isla de Leon, and the communication between the Isla and Cadiz, without loss of time, and to consider of the general principle and plan on which these important possessions ought to be defended. Let him then suggest

the construction of the works which appear to him to be most necessary, working always upon the principle and the plan which he would first have laid down for the defence of the Isla, &c.; and supposing always, which he may be sure will be the case, that there will be a sufficient number of men to occupy and defend the works, the construction of which he shall recommend.

“ When you shall be prepared with these plans, I would suggest to you and Mr. Frere to recommend their adoption, and the immediate execution of the works, to the serious attention of the government; and to press them to provide for the effectual defence of Cadiz, always in the spirit in which I wrote to General Whittingham; and ‘ of the conditions,’ General O’Farrell’s paper will afford topics in abundance by which this object may be urged; and in fact, every man who knows any thing of the state of Spain, and of the sentiments of the people of the country, must be certain that if Cadiz should hold out, and the Mediterranean islands continue in the possession of the Patriots, and the colonies continue true to the cause, the Bonapartists may have the military possession of the country—but, sooner or later, they must lose it.

“ In the same view I would earnestly urge the government to send the fleet to Minorca, and to provide effectually for the defence of that and the other islands. The equipment of the fleet, which ought to be looked to, is a measure for future consideration.”*

Precautions were now taken for removing the bridges and boats, as well as the carts, mules, and other means of conveyance—all the provisions—along with the militia, and even the inhabitants, as fast as the enemy should advance into the country. It was the opinion of the British general that those in the southern and eastern parts of the province (Estremadura) that could not collect about Elvas, should go off towards the kingdom of Algarve; and those to the northward, to get into the

* To Major-general the Hon. W. Stewart, Viseu, 27th Feb. 1810.

hills about Niza, Portalegre, &c. The commanding officer, who resided at Lisbon, was desired to remove from that part of the province, on the left of the Tagus, all carts, mules, &c., and the provisions which they could carry with them; and these were to go to Setuval, and under the protection of the castle of Palmella.

The magistrates, both military and civil, were enjoined to call forth the several companies of ordenanza, under the Capitafios Mor, to do the enemy all the mischief in their power; not by assembling in large bodies, but by impeding his communications, by firing upon him from the mountains and strong passes with which the whole country abounds, and by annoying his foraging and other parties that he might send out. His cavalry could not act in a great part of Alemtejo, and with activity much might be done by the Capitafios Mor in the strong parts of the country.

Whilst by these and other active measures the British general was engaged in placing Portugal in as formidable a position as possible; in directing the admirable defence of Cadiz, animating the partisans, and sustaining the last feeble efforts of Spain; and whilst the responsibility of so arduous an undertaking was felt by him in its full extent, it is lamentable to reflect that his conduct should have been assailed by the opposition party in England, with a meanness of spirit at complete variance with candour and justice. As if he had not performed a single meritorious action; rescued Portugal from the grasp of an enemy whose next effort would have been directed against ourselves; as if the victories he had won, and the distinctions conferred upon him by the allied governments were utterly worthless and undeserved, they attacked him with an envious and bitter feeling which showed, they *were the opposition*, but which instead of seating them upon the opposite benches, recoiled upon their own heads.

On the day preceding that upon which the motion for a vote of thanks was expected, Lord Grey rose in the House of Lords to express his opinion that it was of considerable importance

that some information should be laid before the house by which they might be enabled to form an opinion with regard to the propriety of the motion at all. It was necessary first to ascertain whether Lord Wellington's advance into Spain was the result of his own judgment or of the instructions of ministers. Another point not less important was, that they should have before them the whole of the information furnished by Lord Wellington respecting the action at Talavera, there existing strong reasons to suppose that while ministers and their adherents held out that engagement as a victory, they knew that our army must retreat; that the battle said to be a victory must be followed by all the consequences of a defeat. Lord Grey then moved for the instructions sent to Lord Wellington; for copies of the despatches received from him on his marching to Placencia; for those sent from Talavera after the battle; and also for the correspondence between his lordship and the Spanish government respecting the supplies of the army.

These motions, however, were negatived, not only as totally unnecessary at that time; but on the ground that there was no precedent for calling for papers in order to inquire into the general conduct of a campaign where the sole object contemplated was, a specified vote of thanks for a particular service. Upon the following day, therefore, Lord Liverpool rose for the purpose of moving thanks to Lord Wellington and the officers and men under his command, for the skill and ability, the valour and steadiness, by which they obtained the glorious victory at Talavera.

It was honourable to the mover and to the ministry of which he was the head, and peculiarly satisfactory to him whom it was intended to honour, that he had so framed his motion with a view to conciliation as to separate the conduct of the army and of the officer commanding, as was only right and just, from every other subject connected with the general management of the campaign, so wholly independent of them. He maintained that whatever opinion might be entertained with respect to the measures which led to the battle there could be only one as to

the skill of the general, and the valour of his army. "It had been determined," he said, "on the part of the French to make a concentrated attack on the combined armies; that although the Spanish army was present and partially engaged, the brunt of the action was borne by the English, not amounting to more than 20,000 men, whilst the French army mustered little less than 50,000 veteran troops.

"Yet under these circumstances the enemy was driven from the field after repeated attacks with the loss of nearly 10,000 men, twenty pieces of artillery, and four standards. Was it the fault of the British commander and his army if this victory was not followed by the liberation of Spain? was it to be contended that an event of so much importance,—that victories like that of Talavera, should not be rewarded by every tribute of honour which that House could bestow? It had been the good fortune of Great Britain to unite a military spirit with commercial pursuits, and every encouragement ought to be given to promote that spirit. It was for this reason he directed the attention of the House exclusively to the conduct of the officer and the army under his command, on the 27th, and 28th of July, 1809."

In reply to Lord Liverpool, the Earl of Suffolk declared that however painful to his feelings to oppose a motion of thanks to Lord Wellington, he could not agree to consider that a victory which was so soon followed by a retreat,—and by which many of the wounded and prisoners fell into the enemy's hands. Then with regard to the capture of the artillery, it was not to be considered as any proof of a signal victory, as it *might have been convenient* for the enemy to leave their artillery upon the field. And most of all, how was it that Lord Wellington was not aware of the reinforcement of 34,000 men which advanced to support the enemy? It was the duty of every general to be provided with such information. There was much ground, likewise, for reprehension in so small a portion of the British having been brought into action; and conduct like this appeared to him in perfect conformity with that of the same

general in bringing up only half his forces to act against the enemy at the battle of Vimiero. This was pretty plain, and as strong as it was plain, had it been founded either on truth or reason; and the Earl of Grosvenor went a little further—he was apprehensive that “if the House were to be called upon to vote thanks for every instance of valour, such a proceeding would draw after it very injurious results. If a single detachment, nay, if an individual happened to exhibit proofs of bravery, their lordships might be called upon to vote away their thanks; and as regarded the battle, it was one which did not appear to him to be entitled to such a reward!”

After some further strictures Lord Grey again rose to argue how little justice there was in such a vote of thanks. “Had the battle of Talavera attained the general object of the campaign? had it attained the immediate object—that of dispersing the enemy’s army? The general’s object was to drive the enemy’s troops before him and obtain possession of Madrid. The French troops in Spain then occupied a defensive line of positions, from Toledo to Salamanca; on the advance of Lord Wellington, they left their positions and concentrated their forces to oppose him. Lord Wellington proceeded in the direction of the capital as far as Talavera, when he was obliged to stop for want of provisions and means of transport. The battle was fought, and the enemy for the moment repulsed, but the enemy retained possession of Madrid, and the British troops were compelled to retreat. It had been said that Lord Wellington displayed great skill in the dispositions he had made for battle; he (Lord Grey) could not at all agree in that opinion. The position on the left had not been sufficiently secured or taken advantage of, and there was much to blame in the conduct of Lord Wellington with respect to the Spanish troops. The Spanish general gave a very different account of their conduct from that given in the despatch. But if Lord Wellington believed the Spanish troops to be of such a description that they could not be trusted to meet the enemy in a situation of such imminent peril; if he held such an opinion of

the Spanish troops, why did he give the Spanish general the option of defending the passes against the advance of the French army under the Duke of Dalmatia, which threatened the flank and rear of the British, or taking care of our sick and wounded at Talavera? Why had not Lord Wellington better information respecting the defence of these passes? Why trust to the intelligence he received from the Spaniards, neglecting even, the ordinary precaution of sending an officer of his own to ascertain whether the passes were properly defended?"

It would be injustice not to give the clear and resistless vindication of the distinguished subject of this memoir, made by his relative, the Marquis of Wellesley, in reply to the repeated attacks made upon him, and the mistaken charges so inconsiderately advanced from want of proper judgment and information. "He should not," observed the noble speaker, "allude to his private feelings in any way; he was deeply sensible that he had a great public duty to perform by vindicating the character and conduct of one so near to him; that all other considerations ought to be lost in their common efforts for the public good. One thing he must observe at the outset, which was, that Lord Grey did not appear very clearly to understand the object of Lord Wellington's operations." Then, instead of dealing in general assertions, like the previous speakers, the Marquis of Wellesley went into a full and elaborate statement of facts, which, as far as Lord Wellington was interested, not merely vindicated his conduct, but completely demolished the arguments of his opponents. He showed that, "on the arrival of his brother in Portugal, he found the enemy not only in possession of the northern provinces, but that a plan had been concerted by which Soult and Victor were to advance, from different points, into the south. The first object, therefore, was the liberation of Portugal. Now the operations by which he expelled Soult, were as able, as rapid, and as conclusive as any recorded in the page of history. It was therefore most unfair, to describe actions like

these, as some noble lords had done, as merely an affair with the rear-guard of Soult's corps. After this, Lord Wellington immediately proceeded to the south to oppose Victor, who had actually advanced in that direction, but who, on the approach of Lord Wellington had thought it prudent to retreat. What was the situation of Spain when Lord Wellington advanced into the country? The supreme central government had been long established, and their authority was generally recognised. The part of the country through which his march lay, abounded in resources of every description; nor was it fair to entertain a doubt of the power and disposition of the Spanish government to render them available. The joint request of the supreme junta and General Cuesta to Lord Wellington, was, that he would operate with the Spanish army in driving Victor from the Tagus. It was impossible, therefore, for Lord Wellington to refuse his assistance for the attainment of this desirable object, as a refusal on his part would have argued a supposition that the Spanish government was incompetent to perform its promises; and that the country, though full of provisions, was unwilling to supply them.

“ Besides this, it was impossible to answer for the safety of Portugal, without striking such a blow against Victor, as might prevent him from joining or co-operating with Soult, or any French corps that might invade that kingdom from the northward.” He next proceeded to state, repelling at once the insinuations and surmises of Lord Grey regarding the British general’s defective arrangements, that the plan agreed upon between the two generals was, that the British army, supported by that under Cuesta should move against the corps of Victor; and that in the meantime, Venegas, by a circuitous route, should threaten Madrid, in order, if possible, by this demonstration, to draw off the attention of the French corps under Joseph and Sebastiani, and thus prevent them from making any movement in conjunction with Victor. The due execution, of this plan in all its parts, was sufficient, he contended, to justify Lord Wellington in his expectations of success; and

accordingly he advanced against Victor, then at Talavera, on the 22nd of July, and soon came in sight of the French army, whom he proposed to attack on the following morning.

"At this moment Victor's corps was unsupported by any other, and consisted of no more than 28,000 men. If, therefore, the attack had been made on the 23rd, as Lord Wellington proposed, the result must have been not only most glorious, but most complete. It happened unfortunately however, that General Cuesta refused to attack the enemy on that day, for what reason had never been explained; and the consequence was that Victor retreated, and made his escape on the very night of the 23d, and effected a junction with Joseph and Sebastiani.

"At the very same time, General Venegas, who ought to have been at Arganda on the 22d, was so perplexed with orders and counter-orders from the junta, that he did not arrive there till the 29th, a day after the battle had been fought. These things were certainly very unfortunate; but," Lord Wellesley emphatically added, "against such strange mismanagement what human prudence could provide?

"With respect to the political questions connected with our assistance afforded to Spain, he perfectly agreed that there was a necessity for a radical change in the present modes of the Spanish government. It was impossible, however, that such a change could be the work of a day; but we were not therefore to abandon the Spaniards to the mercy of their cruel invaders, or to desert them in the crisis of their fortunes.

"With regard, indeed, to the battle of Talavera itself, he would say nothing more of it in a military point of view, than that the British troops had succeeded in repulsing the attack of a French army almost double their own numbers, the efforts of which had been chiefly directed against their position. But, with respect to its consequences, he would boldly maintain that this signal defeat had essentially contributed to the main objects of the campaign. For, unless that blow had been struck against Victor, it would have been impossible to pre-

vent the enemy from overrunning the south of Spain, or from making a fresh irruption into Portugal. In fact, it had saved the south of Spain from absolute destruction. It had afforded time to Portugal to organize her army and to strengthen her military posts. It had also enabled Lord Wellington to take a position where he might derive supplies from Spain, at the same time that he drew nearer his own magazines; and upon the whole he did not hesitate to say, that his brother was as justly entitled to every distinction that had been conferred upon him, and to every reward and honour which it was in the power of that House to bestow, as any noble lord who, for his personal services, had obtained the same distinctions, or who sat there by descent from his illustrious ancestors."

After so luminous an exposition, and a defence so unanswerable, no further opposition was made to the motion as far as it related to Lord Wellington and his brave army, although Lord Grenville contended that the whole substance of Lord Wellesley's speech went to support Lord Grey's motion for papers; for though Lord Liverpool had declared that the present question was to be considered only in reference to the case precisely in point, yet he would still contend that the question stood on a broader basis,—in fact, whether a British army ought to have been risked in an enterprise which depended so much on Spanish co-operation. This question was none of his seeking; but he must say, that even a victory, if attended with calamitous consequences, did not deserve the thanks of that House. He believed that Lord Wellington was fettered by the nature of the service in which he had been sent, and by his instructions; and that the plan and its calamitous consequences ought to be attributed to ministers.

In pursuance of the motion an act of Parliament was passed for settling on Lord Wellington an annuity of 2000*l.*, but which was not carried without considerable opposition from both Houses of the Legislature; and so powerful was the voice of party, so violent were the prejudices excited by the clamour of men out of power, that a petition was got up and presented against

it from the city of London. The nation at large, however, did more justice to the arduous services and merit of the English commander, nor considered the sum of 2000*l.* a-year too great for a man who was devoting all his energies, and risking life and reputation in resisting the most powerful and inveterate enemy that ever threatened the existence of Great Britain.

It will not be uninteresting to remark the impression produced on the mind of the distinguished individual to whom these debates referred, and who was at that time actively organizing that system of defence which proved successful even beyond his most sanguine expectations. It cannot be better shown than in his own words. He was observed to peruse the packet of papers which contained them with more than common interest, and without being in the slightest degree ruffled even when reading the replies to his noble relative by men of such acknowledged powers and surpassing eloquence as Lords Grey and Grenville. That he felt regret, however, that such men could so far lend themselves to the objects of party as to take only a partial, narrow view of a subject so important in all its bearings, to contemplate the dark side alone, and to blame him for circumstances that lay wholly beyond his control, is apparent from the tone of his letter. "In respect to home politics," he observes,* "I acknowledge that I do not like them much, and I am convinced that the government cannot last. I do not think that any government can stand after an inquiry into an important measure by a committee of the House of Commons. However, I am of opinion that the King has a right, and must be supported in the exercise of the right, to choose his own servants, as long as he thinks it proper to persevere in retaining those whom he prefers in his service; and if no other advantage shall have been gained by the formation of the existing government, it has at least drawn from Lord Grenville opinions which will render the employment of him not inconsistent with the King's ease, if he should think proper to call him to his service.

* Dated Viseu. To the Earl of Liverpool, March 1, 1810.

"I assure you that what has passed in parliament respecting me has not given me one moment's concern, as far as I am personally concerned; and, indeed, I rejoice at it, as it has given my friends an opportunity of setting the public right upon some points on which they had not been informed, and on others on which the misrepresentations had driven the truth from their memories. But I regret that men like Lord —— and others should carry the spirit of party so far as to attack an officer in his absence, should take the ground of their attack from Cobbett and the Moniteur, and should at once blame him for circumstances and events over which he could have no control, and for faults which, if they were committed at all, were not committed by him."

A subject, however, which at this period gave him far more pain than any strictures on his own conduct could do, was the complaints which continued to be brought against the soldiers of his army by the inhabitants. It appeared that on many occasions they had been guilty of the utmost brutality, insulting and plundering the people whenever they had an opportunity of committing their outrages with impunity, and, upon detection, refusing to come forward or give evidence of any kind against the actual perpetrators. An atrocious act had been recently perpetrated at Villa Nova by an English soldier upon the person of an unfortunate cobbler, who had fallen by his hand in a fit of passion—because, forsooth, the unlucky Portuguese had refused to mend the *gentleman's* boots. "The crime was well known," and had been witnessed by more than one, yet no evidence could be obtained to convict the murderer. The ordinary courts-martial were found wholly insufficient to repress these excesses—the soldiers and other witnesses refused to substantiate upon oath the information they had conveyed to the minister of the police—and a system of terror on one side and of protection on the other generally operated so as to screen the offenders from justice. In this flagrant case Lord Wellington in vain exerted himself to convict the delinquent; the parties who had given the information refused to come for-

ward ; and it was declared by Lord Wellington that he had no means of convicting this soldier of a deliberate intention to murder the deceased, or even of proving that he committed the act, because the deceased refused to mend his boots.

" It is unfortunately too true," he continues, " that outrages of all descriptions are committed by the British soldiers in this country, notwithstanding the pains taken by me, and the general and other superior officers of the army, to prevent them, and to punish those who commit them.

" It is useless to trouble you with a description of the causes of these evils, upon which I have written fully to the King's ministers. One of them undoubtedly is, the disinclination of the people of this country to substantiate upon oath before a court-martial their complaints of the conduct of the soldiers, without which it is well known that it is impossible for me to punish them ; the consequence is, that the criminals are tried, and acquitted for want of evidence ; for it is vain to expect evidence of an outrage from the comrades of a soldier who has committed it.

" The records of the embassy at Lisbon must be filled with complaints of the same general nature as that which I now return to you ; and with demands from me of evidence on the facts stated ; the result of which has invariably been, that no evidence has been adduced to substantiate the complaints made, and those who have committed the outrages complained of have remained unpunished.

" I am concerned to add that I know of no means which have not already been adopted to endeavour to keep the British soldiers in order. Detachments are never allowed to march except under command of an officer : and the most strict orders have been given for the regulation of the conduct of the soldiers when so employed ; and an officer of the provost-marshall's establishment is employed whenever the numbers of any detachment will justify such an appointment.

" But all has hitherto been in vain ; the outrages complained of are still perpetrated, and they will continue until the govern-

ment and people see the necessity of doing their utmost to convict, before a court-martial, those soldiers of the crimes of which, I am sorry to say, I am too well convinced they have reason to complain.*

The details here given present a startling picture of the real nature and character of war, of which the destructive and demoralizing principles, at variance alike with natural reason and justice and with all forms of civil government, tend, most of all, to brutalize the people, and render the common soldier a mere instrument, deprived of the common sympathies of his kind, and inured to the office of a public executioner. If such were the practices in the country of an ally, what may we suppose to take place in a conquered country; and if all the activity, love of justice and of discipline, qualities so pre-eminent in the character of Lord Wellington, were unable to remedy evils so terrible and so deeply rooted in the system of all warfare, how incalculable must be the wretchedness of countries subjected to military rule, under commanders wanting those qualities, and devoid of those principles which so peculiarly distinguished him?

Every day that now passed before the invasion of the French found Lord Wellington better prepared to meet, if not to repel it; not an hour was lost, and when all had been done that human prudence and the means he had at command could accomplish, he still saw, like all men whose aim is to excel, how much remained which it was impossible for him to effect. In writing to Admiral Berkeley,† with a full explanation of his plans and resources, he emphatically observes, “I wish I could do *more*, but upon a fair calculation of circumstances, probable events, and means, I do not think I can with propriety undertake, or do otherwise than give my opinion against undertaking more.

“I think it scandalous that the Portuguese regular army should not be 100,000, instead of 50,000 men; more scandalous that they should want near 10,000 men to complete to 50,000; still more scandalous that they have not means to support even

* To Charles Stuart, Esq., Viseu, March 6, 1810.

† Viseu, March 23, 1810.

the army which they have ; and almost as bad as all the rest, that Great Britain should not have been able to send arms and clothing for men as soon as the French have been able to send in their reinforcement of made soldiers which are now upon our frontier.

" The means, however, being as they are, deficient, I must not undertake what is not necessary with insufficient men.

" The French endeavoured to surprise one of our posts upon the Agueda on the night of the 19th, occupied by four companies of the 95th, under Colonel Beckwith ; they were repulsed in fine style with some loss. We lost Lieutenant Mercer and three men killed and seven wounded.

In addition to the want of energy on the part of the Portuguese government, Lord Wellington was concerned to observe that the Spanish troops made no progress in their discipline, and that they had not improved in efficiency since the arrival of General Stewart at Cadiz. " I am afraid," he writes,* " that much time will elapse before any considerable improvement will be made in the state of these troops, or before several other measures will be adopted by the Spanish government, which are expedient and even necessary in the existing situation of affairs. We must not be discouraged, however, by these untoward circumstances. I have but little doubt that the Spanish troops, bad as their appearance and discipline are, will do their duty in fortified positions ; and even if they were worse than they are, and the difficulties of all kinds with which we have to contend were greater than they are, the interests of Great Britain and the world are too deeply involved in this contest for us to recede one step from it, which may not be rendered absolutely necessary by circumstances. The affairs of the Peninsula have invariably had the same appearance since I have known them ; they have always appeared to be lost ; means have always appeared inadequate to objects ; and the sole dependence of the whole has apparently been upon us. The contest, however, still continues, and is in its third year ; and we must continue it as

* To Major-general the Honourable W. Stewart, Viseu, March 27, 1810.

long as we can with the means which the country affords, improving them as much as the people will allow us, as it is obvious that Great Britain cannot give us larger means than we have."

About the same period Lord Wellington received intelligence, grossly exaggerated, that a serious insurrection had broken out in the Sierra de Ronda ; that King Joseph, surrounded in Malaga by the insurgents, had great difficulty in extricating himself ; that the French corps on the Guadiana had broken up on the 18th, Mortier marching towards Monasterio and Sta Olalla in the Sierra Morena ; and the other corps of Merida retiring towards Truxillo.

Although prepared on all sides, the French still hesitated to make a general attack ; and in an interesting communication to Colonel Torrens at the close of the month, Lord Wellington briefly sums up his opinion of the approaching campaign in the following words :—" I can give you no news ; the French threaten us on all sides, and are most desirous to get rid of us. But they threaten upon too many points at a time to give me much uneasiness respecting any one in particular, and they shall not induce me to disconnect my army.

" I am in a situation in which no mischief can be done to the army or to any part of it ; I am prepared for all events ; and if I am in a scrape, as appears to be the general belief in England, although certainly not my own, I'll get out of it."*

The great disadvantage, however, under which Lord Wellington now laboured was, that the late Sir John Moore, when in Portugal, had given his opinion that the country could not be defended by the army under his command ; and although it was obvious that the country was in a very different situation now, and the position of the British commander different from that of his predecessor, persons entertained a prejudice against the adoption of any plans for opposing the enemy of which Portugal was to be the theatre, or its means the instrument—so much as not even to consider them. The marches and operations of the army under Sir John Moore, as well as his despatches

* To Lieutenant-colonel Torrens, Viseu, March 31, 1810.

proved that little was known of Portugal at that time ; and while Lord Wellington declared that he had as much respect as any man could have for the opinion and judgment of Sir John Moore,—that he should mistrust his own if opposed to his in a case which the latter had had an opportunity of knowing and considering,—he felt convinced that he could know nothing of its then existing state. Besides this prejudice founded on Sir John Moore's opinion, there was also another and very general prejudice against any military operation in the Peninsula.

To say nothing of the change of circumstances, the British general saw clearly that, as long as he remained in a state of activity in Portugal, the contest must continue in Spain ; that the French must employ a very large force in the operations necessary to compel him to evacuate it : and they could not bring that force to bear upon Portugal without abandoning other objects, and exposing their dominion in Spain to the utmost peril. Should they not succeed in compelling the British to evacuate the country, they would be placed in a very critical position ; and the longer, in fact, that the English continued in Portugal, the more seriously would they suffer by the prolongation of the contest in Spain. It was on this ground that the British general, while preparing, on one hand, to re-embark and bring off his army in safety, was equally resolved, on the other, to risk a battle, should the enemy not appear in more formidable numbers than rendered such a step prudent. Having taken a fair and dispassionate view of all the circumstances of his position, he had no desire of pushing matters to extremities ; if there existed a military necessity for it, he had every thing in readiness to withdraw from the contest, while he was not disposed to take alarm at a force which he did not consider superior to that which he had under his own command. There was another point also on which he expressed himself in that pleasant, good-natured tone for which he was often so remarkable ; “ that should they in the end be compelled to go, he felt a little anxiety that they should go, like gentlemen, out of the hall-door, particularly after the preparations which he had made to

enable them to do so ; and not out of the back-door, or by the area." His remarks also on the disposition so generally attributed to him in England, of fighting savage battles are in the same happy spirit, and show how justly he estimated at its worth the popular feeling of the day. He assured Lord Liverpool* "that, whatever people might say, he was by no means so fond as they imagined of fighting desperate battles ; for if he were, he might fight one every day he pleased. On the contrary, he had kept the army for six months in two positions, notwithstanding their own desire and that of the allies that he should take advantage of many opportunities which the enemy apparently offered of striking a blow against them ; in some of which the single operation would certainly have been successful. But he looked to the great result of maintaining our position on the Peninsula, and would not allow himself to be diverted from it either by his own army or by the enemy." Nor, on the other hand, was he influenced by public opinion that he ought to do more, or quit the country—a doctrine industriously spread by the Whig leaders and their adherents, and re-echoed by the clamorous voice of people still more ignorant upon the subject than the opposition members themselves. Deprived of the local knowledge and the means of judging which Lord Wellington possessed ; influenced by a blind admiration of Napoleon, and dazzled by his success, the opposition would have submitted to the terms sought to be imposed by him, and purchased a hollow and dangerous peace by sacrificing the true interest as well as the honour of Great Britain. With far clearer and more statesmanlike views, though arrogating nothing of the self-complacent wisdom and affected superiority of talent so ostentatiously obtruded on the world by men like these, this great soldier saw the inherent weakness of that system of military force which they held in so much awe ; and the opinions he avowed at the period afford a striking contrast to the short-sighted views and fears of politicians whose reputation rested

* To the Earl of Liverpool, Secretary of State, Viseu, April 2, 1810.

on the victorious career of him on whom they had weakly pinned their faith.

These opinions are the more remarkable as having been recorded when the star of Napoleon shone the brightest,—when Austria lay prostrate after her last struggle, and, by uniting herself in the closest bonds with the conqueror, sacrificing her imperial daughter as a peace-offering to the new idol of irresistible power; and, before Russia had dared to breathe a word of resistance—when Spain was without an army—and the eyes of Europe were directed to the close of the eventful drama which was to yield up the world to Napoleon on the plains of Portugal.

At this very time Lord Wellington, in his own words, did not despair of seeing a check to the Bonaparte system. Recent transactions in Holland showed him “that it was all hollow within; that it was inconsistent with the wishes, the interests, and even the existence of civilized society, insomuch that he could not trust even his own brothers to carry it into execution*.”

The man who could thus maintain his calmness and equanimity; the coolness and decision of his judgment amidst events that caused the utmost excitement and alarm, particularly in England—then the last barrier to French dominion over Europe—and where, as the fearful contest proceeded, and appeared to approach nearer our own hearths and homes, party spirit naturally ran into the most violent extremes—was both a great man and a great statesman. We have already had occasion to observe, during his campaigns in India, the very enlightened views he entertained, the able conduct he displayed, and the admirable counsels he left behind him; nor have we less reason to feel the same respect for the singular penetration and power of reasoning to which he evinced in a wider and more important sphere, where events thickened round him, and emergencies and trials he could not possibly have antici-

* Viseu, 4th April, 1810.

pated, called for the exercise of all his powers ; the utmost exertion of his ardent mind and vigorous genius.

He saw and deprecated the violence of party, as most injurious to the interests of the country, and the success of the common cause ; for he felt that political disunion, of which he had experienced the unhappy consequences in Spain, was to be dreaded far more than the enemy. It was such violence which rendered the British government, at this time, incapable of making the exertion which it might have done ; and produced apprehension and alarm on all sides. The weak and powerless are necessarily wretched ; they are incessantly haunted by unreal evils ; continual fears deprive them of the power of reasoning and acting ; and it is thus with a weak government ; it dare not hope, and it can have no confidence in any party. Lord Wellington saw exactly the situation in which the ministry were placed ; and he pointed out the remedy, had either the government or the people possessed the same moderation and judgment which dictated the advice which he gave them. The government, he pleasantly observes, “are terribly afraid that I shall get myself and them into a scrape. But what can be expected from men who are beaten in the House of Commons three times a week ? A great deal might be done now, if there existed in England less party and more public sentiment, and if there was any government*.”

At the same time, Lord Wellington was aware that the state of opinion in England was very unfavourable to the Peninsular war. “The ministers,” he observed, “are as much alarmed as the public, or as the opposition pretend to be, and they appear to be of opinion that I am inclined to fight a desperate battle which is to answer no purpose.” All parties, however—government, opposition, and people—quite agreed in one thing, which was to throw upon him the whole responsibility of bringing away the army in safety, after staying in the Peninsula till it should be necessary to evacuate it. But so far from

* Viseu, 7th April, 1810.

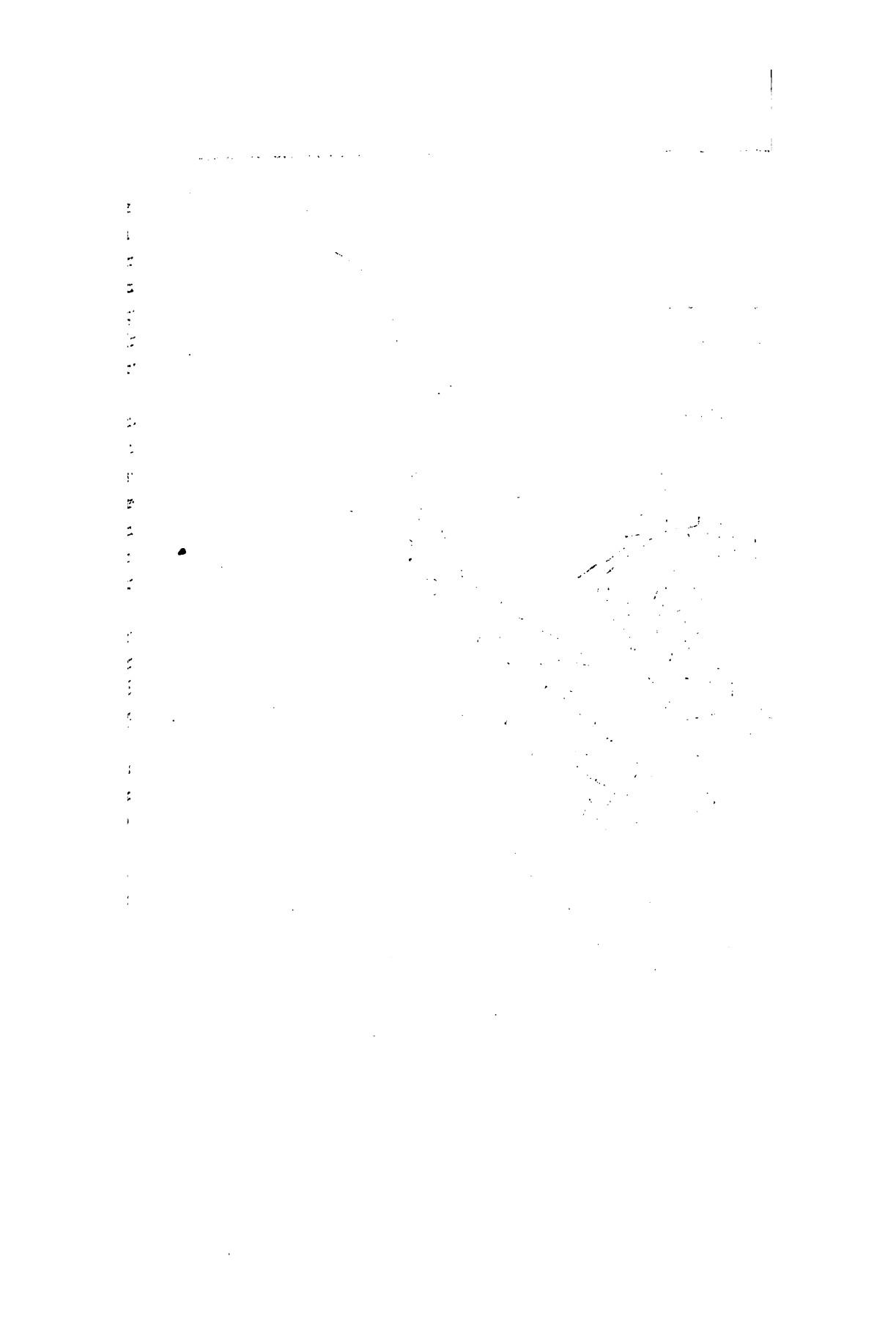
being terrified at this general combination to make him accountable, if affairs went wrong; so far from being compelled to hazard desperate engagements to preserve his army, he had, by his able dispositions, not only protected Portugal, and held the enemy at bay, but deterred them from investing the frontier towns; giving Portugal an efficient army; reawakened a better spirit in the armies of Spain, by teaching them to depend on their own resources, and to recognise the general partisan system throughout the country; and, instead of being desirous to risk a desperate battle, he was in a position either to assume the offensive with success, or to retreat without dishonour and without loss.

Another excellent result of the cautious, yet formidable system he had pursued, was the time he gained to place the allied forces in the most complete and efficient state, insomuch that wherever the enemy ventured upon offensive movements, the least demonstrations on the part of the British and allied corps, deterred them from attacking the frontier towns, and induced them to resume their positions. It was this which led to the continued delay in the French invasion of Portugal—to the concentration of their forces, to the fresh reinforcements poured in; to the exertions made to complete the subjugation of Spain before commencing the attack; and, finally, to the appointment of Massena as generalissimo to command what was newly termed “the army of Portugal.” It was thus that, without fighting a single battle,—although, as he himself states, accused of the most sanguinary intentions,—and of being actually ready to cry “havock, and let slip the dogs of war,” he had produced, without any risk of loss, more than all the advantages which he could have obtained, either by a system of petty warfare, or by risking general engagements. Yet such is the contagious power of ignorance, prejudice, and calumny,—and such the lamentable weakness of human nature, that not only the people, but the ministry of Great Britain, and, if we are to believe them, the opposition, *par excellence*, were almost in daily apprehension of receiving accounts that a

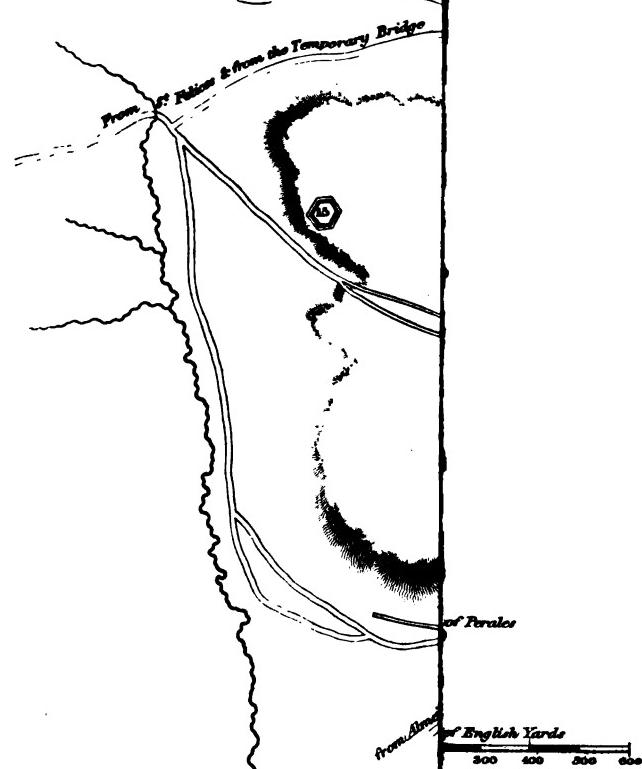
man, capable of acting as he had done, was taken with his whole army, or cut to pieces, or driven into the sea. In fact, the mere shadow of Napoleon's power had obscured their vision, and awed their souls; for they believed that it was built upon a rock not to be shaken, instead of being founded, as it was, upon the treacherous sands; and they fell down and worshipped the golden image which he had set up without perceiving its feet of clay.

That Napoleon, however, estimated the genius and skill of the British general at a higher rate than any of the allied governments, his cautious manner of proceeding, his continual threats and demonstrations, his marchings and counter-marchings—and which he continued for months without making a regular attack—afford ample testimony; it being well known that he directed all the movements of his Spanish campaigns as if he had been upon the spot.

Thus Marshal Massena had arrived at Salamanca on the 15th of May, issued one of the usual proclamations, instantly taken the command of the troops in Leon, Old Castile, and Estremadura, and prepared for active operations. His high reputation, the strength of his army, the expected arrival of the imperial guards, with the Emperor, as was generally believed, at their head; all served to give the most formidable and imposing character to this expedition. It comprised a force of 75,000 well disciplined troops, amply supplied with all requisites for an invading army; yet notwithstanding its marked superiority, its commander was instructed to proceed with the utmost caution and circumspection. The victories of Roliça, Vimiero, and Corunna; the passage of the Douro, and the battle of Talavera, had taught Napoleon to respect the abilities of the British leader; for with the frankness of all brave soldiers, he had declared, on the flight of Soult, and on other occasions, that Wellesley was no common general. From that period a more cautious system was adopted; the French commanders became more wary, proceeded by rule, and never gave battle without combining their forces, and for some evident advantage. Hence the



**Plan
of
CIUDAD RODRIGO**
*describing its Siege by the Allies
GENERAL THE EARL OF WELLING
Commander in Chief.*



REMARKS

January 7th Lord Wellington Reconnoitred Ciudad de Rod
 8th The Place Invested, & at night the Redoubt Rene
 9th at night The Batteries (C) D (E) to contain 53 Guns
 10th at night The Convent of Sth Cruz (F) carried by S
 The second parallel commenced by the
 14th day The enemy made a sortie & destroyed
 at night The Convent of Sth Francisco (G) and
 15th at night The advanced battery on the last (H) to
 16th at day light The battery for seven guns on
 17th at night At ten minutes past seven the breaching

- 12. House of Instruction for Poor Children
- 13. Works constructed by the English
- 14. Work constructed by the English
- 15. Work constructed by the English

precautions taken, and the repeated delays in undertaking the second invasion of Portugal, although Spain had no longer an army, and the French forces in the Peninsula, amounted to not less than 250,000 men. These were now chiefly concentrated on the frontiers of Portugal, with the exception of the different corps employed in garrisons, in holding the guerillas in check, and in conducting the siege of Cadiz. Still, Massena, with a British force of less than 50,000 men in his front, supported by the Portuguese, whose discipline had not yet been put to the proof, instead of advancing at once to the attack, adhered to the old military rules, and proceeded to invest Ciudad Rodrigo with an army of 50,000 men.* The siege was pressed with the utmost vigour; bridges were thrown across the Aguada both above and below the town; and ground was broken on the 13th upon a high ridge, which commands the walls at a distance of six hundred yards. By the 25th the batteries, directed upon a single point, opened their tremendous fire, and the place was summoned on the 27th, but without effect. The outworks in the suburbs, were then carried with immense slaughter, but the garrison as well as the inhabitants, still held out with the greatest resolution and gallantry. Although the batteries were now fixed upon the lower ridge and swept the town, there was no idea of surrender till on the 10th of July the Spanish guns being all silenced, the houses in flames, the counterscarp blown up by a mine, and a wide breach opened; a white flag was hoisted on the walls and the city surrendered.

From the commencement of the siege, Lord Wellington had been most anxiously desirous to relieve the place, and had been deterred from attempting its relief only by the conviction which he felt that the attempt must fail, and that its immediate fall and the irrevocable loss of the cause of the allies would be the consequence of the failure. He had been strongly urged by the Spanish government, and General Romana had come from Badajos to offer his utmost assistance in making some diversion

* 4th June, 1810.

to succour the distressed city which fought so gallantly, and looked for the aid of the British. However painful to witness this gallant resistance, after having declared that if circumstances permitted, and it were found at all practicable, he would assuredly march to its relief, Lord Wellington, while he conceived it his duty to decline the attempt, showed how it was impossible he could have succeeded, opposed to so overwhelming a force, with other corps of the enemy at hand ready to fall upon him. It would, in fact, have been to play into the hands of the enemy, both the previous sieges, and the delays so long continued before striking a blow, having for one of their objects to betray the British general into some act of imprudence. This he had the penetration to see, and though loaded with obloquy, accused of having promised and failed to perform his promise of affording relief, he would not swerve from the strict line of duty he had laid down. The second proclamation of Massena on entering Portugal, dictated doubtless by Napoleon, and which also charged Lord Wellington with breach of faith towards his allies, evidently showed that such were the hopes of the enemy, had he weakly consented to fall into the snare.

Upon a point of so much importance to his character as a man, as well as a soldier, it is only justice to give the reasons of the British commander in his own words. Besides the numerical superiority of the enemy's troops, there were others employed in communication with the rear and with the right, while the country in which he must have carried on his operations to raise the siege, or even to relieve the place would have been highly advantageous to the enemy on account of his superiority in cavalry. "I had intelligence, of the truth of which I could entertain no doubt, that the enemy had collected in the neighbourhood of Ciudad Rodrigo, for the purpose of the siege, the whole of the 6th and of the 8th corps of the army in Spain; the former consisting of 31,611 effectives, including 4856 cavalry; the latter consisting of 25,956 effectives, including 4716 cavalry, according to returns of those corps of a very late period which had been intercepted and

communicated to me. . . . Under these circumstances, however much I have been interested in the fate of this place, not only on account of its military and political importance, but on account of its brave governor and garrison, and inhabitants, I have considered it my duty to refrain from an operation which it was probable would be attended by the most disastrous consequences.”*

This we think at once decides the question, as regards any degree of blame to be attached to the conduct of Lord Wellington; he had done all that lay within the scope of human prudence to avert the blow; he had approached as near as Alverca to watch a favourable opportunity to advance, or avail himself of any error committed by the besiegers, but it was all in vain. Had the Spanish government and its generals pursued the system so strenuously recommended to them even after the strange treatment he had experienced at their hands, this additional misfortune could never have befallen them, and he was in no way bound to supply their want of prudence and energy by following so bad an example, and incurring the inevitable destruction of the British army. That he did not despair of their cause was owing rather to his knowledge of the inherent weakness and hollowness of the system pursued by the enemy than to his opinion of their strength; and with that far-seeing eye and strong judgment which characterised him when their affairs appeared the most desperate, he detected the errors committed by Napoleon, and he still hoped, because he saw the incongruity and the inadequacy of the means employed by the invader to the end he had in view. And this we consider a very remarkable fact—one which stamps him as a man of pre-eminent intellect—and of sounder and more enlarged views than his illustrious contemporary, brilliant as were his powers. When all Europe, with England herself, stood filled with admiration, or awe-stricken before the great conqueror, he alone measured him with a correct eye, estimated his measures at

* To the Earl of Liverpool, Alverca, 11th July, 1810.

their real worth, and foretold their failure while the fate of Spain and Great Britain herself lay trembling in the balance. Though of all men he was best able to appreciate his colossal power in its military strength and resources, he knew the weakness of the base on which it rested; that he had, to use a military phrase, occupied lines more extended than he could support,—he saw him as he really was, intoxicated with success, without moderation and wisdom to maintain the advantages which he had obtained. Indeed, long before the event, he seems to have reasoned upon the actions of Napoleon as if he were capable, as it proved, of engaging in some project as wild and desperate as the Russian expedition, which alone could surpass the madness of persisting in a struggle so hopeless as the entire conquest of the Peninsula. Thus he justly remarked, “I think there is something discordant in all the French arrangements for Spain. Joseph divides his kingdom into *préfectures*, while Napoleon parcels it out into governments: Joseph makes a great military expedition into the South of Spain, and undertakes the siege of Cadiz, while Napoleon places all the troops and half the kingdom under the command of Massena, and calls it the army of Portugal.

“It is impossible that these measures can be adopted in concert; and I should suspect that the impatience of Napoleon’s temper will not bear the delay of the completion of the conquest of Spain; and that he is desirous of making one great effort to remove us by the means of Massena.”* And again in giving his opinion upon the relative positions of the belligerents, he concludes with the following just observations: “After this relative view of the disposition of the two contending parties in the Peninsula, you will observe that the enemy have extended themselves to such a degree, that even with their large force they can make no rapid progress towards the final subjugation of the country till they shall have defeated this army or obliged it to evacuate Portugal.

* To the Right Hon. Henry Wellesley, Celorico, June 11th, 1810.

"They cannot carry on the siege of Cadiz in the South, and I doubt their being able to carry on that of Tarragona, or that of Tortosa in the east; and till we are removed, the whole machine appears brought to a stand."

After the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo, and the commencement of hostilities against the British, the movements of the different armies, both in Spain and Portugal, assume an interest they did not before possess. During the recent operations, the ground between the Azava and the Coa was occupied by the light division of the British army, under the command of General Craufurd. The zeal and ability he had displayed, and the gallantry and perfect discipline of his troops, had become a theme of admiration even to the enemy; and the sole difficulty felt by Lord Wellington was to restrain their ardour, and prevent their coming into useless collision with superior forces. It is always difficult to act wholly on the defensive; and this was more especially felt by the British when opposed to any thing like an equality of force, and in resisting the invasion of a country like Portugal. Such a campaign called for the utmost confidence on the part of the commander-in-chief in the prudence and ability of his general officers; even after supplying all with the general plan and the most minute directions, the lynx-eye and the lion-heart, eager to seize advantage and prompt for action, are to be kept continually on the alert. With all these, an imprudent action, in the eagerness to repulse the enemy, took place upon the Coa. The enemy, assembling a strong force at Marialva, crossed the Aguada, and General Craufurd retired slowly upon Almeida. In his retreat, covered by the German and Portuguese cavalry, they were charged by a column of horse with great impetuosity. Yet, to the surprise of their commander, the Portuguese troops, not only received the enemy with firmness, but vied with the best German hussars in repelling the attack. In several bold skirmishes they also gave proofs of efficiency which showed the success of the system pursued by Marshal Beresford, and near Almeida they distinguished themselves in a manner which called forth the approbation of Lord Welling-

ton himself.* On the 11th, by a rapid *coup-de-main*, General Craufurd succeeded in carrying off one of the enemy's patrols, and so sudden was the attack, that not a single horseman escaped. At the same time the British cavalry charged a small square of the enemy's infantry, which must have surrendered had not the false alarm of the enemy's approach in force drawn their attention to another quarter, giving the enemy time to draw off into a wood, after having repulsed the first charge, in which Colonel Talbot, of the 14th dragoons, was unfortunately slain.

Having taken up the position assigned him near Almeida, General Craufurd received directions to hold it till the appearance of Ney in force, when he was to pass the Coa without engaging the enemy. But, encouraged by success in those brilliant and daring skirmishes, in which the cavalry of both armies showed so emulous a spirit, he delayed the movement till the French were close upon him, and with 5000 men had to sustain a severe action with an entire corps, under the able and daring Ney. It was with the utmost difficulty he was enabled to gain the left bank and possession of the bridge, from which the enemy was at length repulsed with severe loss. That of the British amounted to nearly 500 men, which was the more to be regretted, as the British, from their inferior number, could less afford these casual losses than the enemy, and even partial victories under similar circumstances, could achieve no desirable purpose. It was thus the campaign opened; the enemy continued to advance and laid siege to Almeida, Craufurd retiring rather more promptly, according to the directions he received.

Meantime General Hill commanded a separate corps in the Alemtejo. It consisted of two divisions of infantry and 1000 horse, comprising a force of 14,000 men, and was charged with the duty of observing the motions of Regnier in Spanish Extremadura. He had exact directions how to proceed, and when the French general moved rapidly towards the Tagus, and

* To the Right Hon. the Commander-in-Chief, Alverca, July 13, 1810.

crossed the river with a view of cutting off its communication with the main force, General Hill, by equal promptitude, crossed at Villa Velha, in time to reach Castello Branco, where he was reinforced by a brigade of cavalry under General Fane. With his advance at Castello Branco, he took up a position at Sarzedas, and established his communications with the commander-in-chief over the Estrella, covering all the avenues through Southern Beira. A reserve of 2000 British and 8000 Portuguese troops were assembled at Thomar, holding, under General Leith, the line of the Zezere, and ready either to support Hill or march in a northerly direction. Lord Wellington, with his head-quarters at Alverca, and his main body, not exceeding 28,000 men, in and around Guarda, was prepared to act, according to circumstances and the movements of the enemy, having his own plans and arrangements clearly and precisely made out.

While still at Alverca, Lord Wellington, in giving further directions to General Craufurd, informed him that he had lately got the *emplacement* of the whole French army of the 1st of June—a very curious document, giving an account of their whole force in Spain, which it computed at not less than 250,000 men. Upon this document he observes, “ I do not think they have means of reinforcing it much farther. This, together with the returns which I have of the French corps in our front, gives me a knowledge of the names of all the principal officers, &c. employed with those corps ; and any paper which may fall into your hands, such as a requisition on a village, signed by an officer or commissary, would be of use to me, as it would serve to show, in some degree, their disposition, and would aid other information.

“ I have observed that the French are singularly accurate in preserving the different *corps d'armée* in the order in which they are first arranged in the line of battle. The corps of Ney, Soult, Mortier, Victor, and Sebastiani are at this moment in the same situation, in respect to each other, as they held before the battle of Talavera, and Junot's corps has come in, and has been placed upon the right of the whole.

"Knowing the names of the officers, the numbers of the regiments and battalions, and the names of the commissaries attached to each corps, and the general order in which they stand in the line, the name of any person making a requisition, in any place, must aid me in forming an opinion of the disposition of the army.

"Hill is now at Atalaya; but I have no letter from him of this morning. The 4th and 6th caçadores will be at Valverde and Aldea Nueva to-morrow at your disposition."*

We perceive from the foregoing extracts the extent to which Lord Wellington pushed his inquiries and knowledge of the enemy, and how he made every kind of information and all occurrences subservient to his main design. He now directed Craufurd to retire upon Carvalhal, holding Valverde and the heights upon the Coa only by his picquets, and communicating by the left of the Pinhel with General Picton. General Campbell, at Castello Bom, was ordered to retire upon the main body, and the same command was issued to the post at Castello Meudo. Massena had not yet began to show himself in force; but the position of the British general, from his extreme desire to aid the frontier towns, and give time to the inhabitants to withdraw with their property, was becoming more anxious and critical. The fall of Ciudad Rodrigo—the investment of Almeida,—and the preparations of Massena, with his overwhelming superiority in cavalry, had produced the strongest excitement both in Spain and Portugal. The reaction on the popular mind against the English was most marked in Lisbon, and it was feared that a repetition of the same scenes, on the part of the lower orders, instigated by mischievous men, would recur,—more particularly should the necessity arise of re-embarking the British army. Intelligence was received by Lord Wellington of the existence of a conspiracy to raise the mob, seize the forts, and cut off the retreat of the allied army to the convoys in readiness to receive them. Aware of the weakness of the

* Alverca, 24th July, 1810.

government and the duplicity of the authorities, who had resisted all his efforts to divide the city into districts and establish an active police, the British general adopted prompt and efficient measures to check so serious an evil, and he pressed them with the utmost vigour. He at once informed the authorities that he should hold them responsible for the tranquillity of the town, and that, if the civil power were not sufficient to restrain the factious and disaffected from instigating the mob to plunder and slaughter, and directing their worst passions against the more respectable and virtuous classes and their own allies, who were there to defend them, martial law should be proclaimed. Language like this from a man like Lord Wellington was effectual; they knew that he never threatened what he did not perform; the rising murmurs and turbulence of the multitude became still, the progress of the evil was arrested, and the conspirators slunk back into their secret conclave, where the evil genius of a Bishop of Oporto and the intrigues of De Souza presided.

But this was not the only unpleasant feature which presented itself, now the tide of success appeared to be turning so rapidly in favour of the French. The commander-in-chief and the officers of the French army in general, altered their system of rigour towards the inhabitants, particularly in the south of Spain, for one of a milder description, which had the effect of reconciling many to the existing government. The loss of Ciudad Rodrigo was felt as a great misfortune by the people of Castile; and they were aggrieved, not only with Lord Wellington but the whole British people, that some effort had not been made to relieve the place. One of the consequences was, that all correspondence with the allied army ceased; persons refused to give any intelligence, and even to forward the communications of those employed to acquire it. Nor was this the only disadvantage felt by such unexpected re-action in the public mind; it gave greater weight and importance to the movements of Massena, and, both at home and abroad, added to the evil prognostics respecting the failure of Lord Wellington's plans. This

great commander felt all the difficulties, added to the immense responsibility which he had to encounter; the utmost degree of caution, combined with rare skill and boldness, were required to enable him to retreat and concentrate his army without loss. A single error might destroy all his projects; and compromise the safety of Portugal and of the British army. On one hand it was important that he should not allow the enemy to attempt the siege of Almeida without keeping their army collected; at the same time that he must not allow them to push him too hard in his retreat. In the present positions of the allied army, he could place the whole between Celorico and Pinhanços the first march, at the same time that he could collect the whole to bear on any one position in a few hours. At this time he received intelligence from General Cox, the governor of Almeida, that there was no force of any importance before the place, and he instantly determined to make a movement to the rear with the infantry, with the exception of the 4th division to be left in observation at Guarda, and which, in retiring, was directed to move upon Linhares. General Craufurd was ordered to be at Celorico, and the whole cavalry under Sir Stapleton Cotton in front, to observe the different roads and points of the enemy's march.

Having thus adapted his movements to the dispositions of the enemy, Lord Wellington stood prepared for every contingency,—either to act on the offensive or to retreat. “Whatever may be the enemy’s intentions,” he says, “(which I think are to dash at us as soon as they shall be prepared, and make our retreat as difficult as possible), we shall be in such a situation as to be able to effect it without being much pressed, or to move forward again if a blow can be struck with advantage.”*

The enemy now advanced as he anticipated, with the intention of throwing their whole force upon both flanks of the army, and thus to bring on a general engagement in a situation advantageous to them, but they found the British withdrawn into

* Alverca, 27th July, 1810.

the valley of Mondego, behind Celorico,—the 4th division, under General Cole, upon Guarda, the whole of the cavalry in front,—calmly observing their movements upon the Coa. The corps under General Hill made a corresponding movement, and passed the Elja, near Salvaterra; while the partisan chief, Colonel Le Cor, with his division, was at Fundao, in communication with the troops at Guarda.

The invasion having commenced, Lord Wellington issued his famous proclamation enjoining the inhabitants on the whole line of his retreat to forsake their houses, to remove their goods and cattle, and destroy all stores and provisions for which they had no conveyance. The magistrates and authorities were also informed that if, after receiving the order from the military officers, they remained to receive the invaders, they should be considered traitors to their country, and suffer the severest penalty of the law.

CHAPTER X.

(1810 to 1814.)

Profound views—Depth of character—Fall of Almeida—Promotion in the army—Opinions of Lord Wellington—Correspondence—Sufferings of the Portuguese—Able remarks—Strictures of Lord Wellington on the regency—Advice to the government—Comprehensive mind—Knowledge of details—On the Spanish system of carrying on the war—Impartial examination of his own opinions—Self-distrust and control—Wonderful harmony of great qualities—Famous retreat—Masterly movement of General Hill—Battle of Busaco—Victory of the British—Massive attempts to turn their position—Retreat of Lord Wellington on Torres Vedras—The famous lines—Strong positions—Winter campaign.

IT was a just observation of the distinguished subject of these memoirs, as regarded the events of war, that as the Almighty does not give “the race to the swift, or the battle to the strong,” so he had himself fought battles enough to know that, even under the best arrangements, the result of any one is not certain ; an opinion wholly in accordance with that trust in Providence, (the Fortune of the ancients) moderation of views and freedom from vain boasting, in other words, too great reliance on human wisdom and daring, which he invariably manifested. At no time had he observed this great truth more remarkably illustrated than by the sudden and unexpected fall of Almeida. The place itself was immensely strong—the works were regularly constructed ; it had a garrison upwards of 4000 men, commanded by an experienced English officer, and it was fully expected that it would stand a protracted siege. Commensurate with its strength, and the supposed duration of its defence, was the large store of provisions and munitions of every kind ; and it was the only grand fortress which arrested the progress of the enemy.

Should the siege be protracted until the autumnal rains, it must render the object of the French commander—even if enabled to proceed with his plans—exceedingly difficult.

After having been regularly invested for a period of ten days, the batteries, consisting of sixty-five pieces of cannon, poured in a tremendous fire during the greater part of the 26th, and on the same night (Sunday) the great magazine in the centre of the town blew up with a fearful explosion. It shook the city like an earthquake; the houses and public buildings were unroofed—numbers of people were killed, and so wide and appalling was the destruction—the sound of which was heard to an immense distance—that it left that noble fortress, like a vast heap of ruins, defenceless before the enemy. Even the batteries—and the ponderous engines on which the garrison relied for their defence, were blown from the walls into the ditches below. But scarcely had the stunning effect of the first shock subsided, when the rappel of the governor was heard beating to arms; the few gunners who were left alive hurried to the ramparts, and opened a fire with such pieces as they found still mounted. A general assault was every moment expected; but the besiegers, almost as much taken by surprise as the garrison, failed, in the confusion of the night, to take advantage of the circumstance. Next morning, when the extent of the evil became manifest, Massena demanded an instant surrender, and, after some preliminary arrangements, the necessity became so obvious, that General Cox no longer hesitated.

“The loss of Almeida,” writes Lord Wellington,* “is a great misfortune; but I do not lose all hopes yet. Since I wrote yesterday to government I have heard that Regnier’s corps has been brought to Sabugal, where it arrived yesterday; so that I have now got the three corps upon my hands. Since yesterday they have made no movement.” And again, in reference to this painful subject, he observes:† “The Arganil

* To the Right Hon. Henry Wellesley, Celorico, 30th of August.

† Celorico, 31st August, 1810.

militia, which was part of the garrison of Almeida, has been sent in, and the two other battalions are to follow this day and to-morrow. The colonel reports that the explosion of the magazine destroyed the whole town; made a breach in the place, blew all the guns, excepting three, into the ditch; destroyed all the ammunition, excepting ten or twelve barrels of powder, and killed or wounded the greater part of the artillery men. The garrison, till this accident, had sustained no loss, and was in the best order and spirits; had no thoughts of surrender, and expected to hold the place for two months. The colonel talks highly of the conduct of Governor Cox. I am sorry to add that the whole of the 24th regiment, with the exception of the major and of the English officers, have gone into the French service. It is said that their object is to have an opportunity of deserting from it, which is well enough for the private soldiers, but is highly disgraceful to the character of the officers. The major commanding the artillery was the person employed by Cox to settle the capitulation for him. He went out and informed the French of the exact state of the place after the explosion, and never returned! Massena has made him a colonel.

"There is nothing new this morning. The enemy talked of attacking Guarda this day; but it is now half-past ten, and I have just received a telegraph message from thence, stating that a patrol had come in, and there was nothing new."

In another of his letters,* connected with financial matters, of which he possessed a clear and sound knowledge as regarded principles, he says: "I heard from government of the appointment of Mr. Drummond, and I have written to that gentleman on the subjects referred to for his inquiries. I am convinced that he will not be able to procure more money, either at Cadiz or Lisbon, than we get at present; and I only hope that his arrangements will not diminish our supplies. Villiers' favourite notion on supplies of money was, that by exertion, a great deal more might be got. My answer

* To Charles Stuart, Esq., Celorico, 30th August, 1810.

was, that we were neither pickpockets nor cointers ; that we could get only the sums which it was convenient, or to the interest of individuals, to transmit to England ; and that I did not see in what manner an increase of exertions by us could increase these sums. However, he has been more successful with the ministers in England than he was with me ; and we owe to him Mr. Drummond's arrival."

Another subject of considerable importance, which had not escaped his attention, was the mode adopted by government in the promotion of officers, and, in showing the operation of the former system, he threw out several valuable suggestions, the introduction of which he conceived would add considerably to the efficiency of the service in a war like that in which he was engaged. The discussion it elicited, and the details given, are at once curious and interesting, showing, at the same time, the extent to which he carried his inquiries on every point connected with the improvement of the army departments. A lamentable want of judgment and of justice and impartiality had been shown in the distribution of military patronage, and it was a singular fact that, with all the duties and all the responsibility which he had to sustain, Lord Wellington had no more power in conferring rank, and promoting the most deserving among his own officers, than one of the common soldiers. " *It would be desirable, certainly, that the only claim to promotion should be military merit; but this is a degree of perfection to which the disposal of military patronage has never been and cannot be, I believe, brought in any military establishment. The commander-in-chief must have friends, officers on the staff attached to him who will press him to promote their friends and relations, all doubtless very meritorious, and no man can, at all times, resist these applications. But if there is to be any influence in the disposal of military patronage, in aid of military merit, can there be any in our army so legitimate as

* To Lieut.-colonel Torrens, Military Secretary to the Commander-in-chief. Celorico, 4th August, 1810.

that of family connexion, fortune, and influence in the country? I acknowledge, therefore, that I have been astonished at seeing Lloyd, with every claim that an officer can have to promotion, still a captain; and others connected with the officers of the staff, promoted as soon as their time of service had expired.

"While writing upon this subject, I am also tempted to communicate to you my opinion upon another branch of it—the disposal of the patronage of the troops serving in foreign service. In all services, excepting that of Great Britain, the commander-in-chief of an army employed against the enemy in the field, had the power of promoting officers, at least to vacancies occasioned by the service in the troops under his command; and in foreign services the principle is carried so far, as that no person can venture to recommend an officer for promotion belonging to an army employed against the enemy in the field, excepting the commander of the army. ¶

"It was pretty nearly the case formerly in our own service; and I believe the greater number of the general officers of the higher ranks of the present day were made lieutenant-colonels by Sir W. Howe, Sir Henry Clinton, Lord Cornwallis, General Burgoyne, Lord Dorchester, &c. But how is it now? The form remains still in some degree the same; that is to say, my secretary keeps the register of the applications, memorials, and regimental recommendations, a trouble which, by the by, might as well be saved; but the substance is entirely altered; and I who command the largest British army that has been employed against the enemy for many years, and who have upon my hands certainly the most extensive and difficult concern that was ever imposed upon any British officer, have not the power of making even a corporal!!! It is impossible that the system can last. It will do very well for trifling expeditions and short services; but those who are to superintend the discipline, and to excite and regulate the exertions of the officers of the army, during a long-continued service, must have the power of rewarding them by the only mode in which they can be rewarded, that is, by promotion.

" It is not known to the army and to strangers, and I am almost ashamed of acknowledging, the small degree, (I ought to say nullity) of power of reward which belongs to my situation; and it is really extraordinary that I have got on so well without it; but the day must come when this system must be altered.

" I do not entertain these opinions and communicate them to you because there are many officers attached to me in the service for whom I desire promotion. All my aides-de-camp,* respecting whom I do feel an interest, have been promoted in their turn in their regiments, or are to be promoted for carrying home the accounts of victories. The only person respecting whose promotion I ever interested myself personally, was that of Colin Campbell, which the Duke of York had promised him, in consequence of his having brought over the accounts of two victories at the same time; and the difficulty I experienced in obtaining his promotion, notwithstanding that promise, is a practical proof of the effects of the system to which I have adverted.

" The consequence of the change of the system in respect to me, would be only to give me the power of rewarding the services of those who have exerted, or should exert themselves zealously in the service; and thus to stimulate others to similar exertions.

" Even admitting that the system of promotion by seniority, exploded in other armies is the best for that of Great Britain, it would still be an advantage that those who become entitled to it should receive it immediately, and from the hand of the person who is obliged to expose them to danger, to enforce discipline, and to call for their exertions. I would also observe that this practice would be entirely consistent with the unvaried usage of the British navy.

" I admit that it may be urged with truth that a larger view

* Among others was Lieut.-general the Lord Fitzroy Somerset, K.C.B., Military Secretary, Horse Guards, with his Grace, from his landing in the Peninsula.

may be taken of the interests of the public, in the mode of promoting the officers of the army, than I am capable of taking; and this view may have suggested the expediency of adopting and adhering to the mode now in use; at the same time I must say that the public can have no greater interest than in the conduct and discipline of an army employed against the enemy in the field; and I am thoroughly convinced, that whatever may be the result in my hands, a British army cannot be kept in the field for any length of time, unless the officers composing it have some hope that their exertions will certainly be rewarded by promotion, and that to be abroad on service, and to do their duty with zeal and intelligence, afford prospects of promotion not afforded by the mere presence of an officer with his regiment, and his bearing the king's commission for a certain number of years.

"I have been induced to communicate these opinions to you, from the consideration of the claims of those officers to which I have drawn your attention at the commencement of this letter, from a strong conviction of their truth, and not, I assure you, from any interest I feel in the result. I would not give one pin to have the disposal of every commission in the army."

When it is considered that these admirable views and sound opinions on a most difficult and perplexing subject, were the result of leisure moments from the toils of a very arduous and critical campaign, we cannot but admire the calm tone and deliberate judgment which they evince throughout. Nor was this all; he carried on an extensive correspondence on a variety of questions connected with the political and military interests of Great Britain and her allies; and from the active and leading part he took in the vigorous administration of the civil power, and the enlarged and statesman-like views he held forth for the direction of the governments with whom he acted, it would be unpardonable to pass over these more interesting and important passages of his life. We have already alluded to the faction formed in Portugal in direct opposition to his

views and those reforms he had so strenuously recommended to the regency and the council ; a faction, moreover, fomented by the old spirit of intrigue, and the desire of screening existing abuses, and corruptions in every department, still kept alive in the court of Brazils. The palpably absurd and unjust measures proposed by the court for the adoption of the government in Portugal, to the manifest detriment of the objects of the war, incurred the severest censures and the most decided opposition on the part of the frank and high-minded Englishman. Averse as he was to interfere in the political concerns of the government, he could not permit a virtual breach of the high promises made to him, and a virtual recalling of the trust reposed in him by a series of low and petty arts, which, in seeking to retain the old exploded system, risked the existence of the monarchy and the independence of the people. At this moment, while pressed by an overwhelming force, led by the most skilful and enterprizing of Napoleon's generals in his front, with every movement of the allied force in the most trying and anxious position, depending on him alone, he had to contend with enemies of a more insidious character, to penetrate their designs, to foil their plans, and take a cool deliberate survey of questions removed from the immediate sphere in which he acted. In a communication to Mr. Stuart,* bearing the same date as his able proclamation to the people of Portugal, he distinctly points out the causes of the mistaken policy and false position assumed by the government and its adherents in the following excellent *exposé*.

" I am not in communication with the secretary of state for foreign affairs, and I do not interfere in the political concerns of the government, but I should recommend to you to draw Lord Wellesley's attention to the arrangement for the government of Portugal lately made in the Brazils, and to the principles on which it has been made.

" It is extraordinary that, during the time that you and I

* To Charles Stuart, Esq., Celorico, 4th August, 1810.

have been working here to give strength and stability to the government, and principally to support Don Miguel Forjas, as being the best instrument to co-operate with us to carry on the war, the king's minister in the Brazils should have promoted a new arrangement of the government, purposely calculated to destroy the very influence which we had supported. Then, the admission of Doctor Raymundo Nogueira into the Regency, and the reasons for this admission, are truly ludicrous. He is to aid in the destruction of the influence of the secretariat, which we had laboured to establish and support; and his appointment is to be agreeable to the lower orders, from among whom he is selected!

" It is unfortunate for the people of the Peninsula that we, in England, have always thought proper to give a democratical character to their proceedings; whereas, nothing was ever farther from their intentions. The principle of all the actions of the good people of these countries is antigallican, and that alone; all that they desire is, that they should be saved from the grasp of the French: and it is a matter of indifference to them by what persons, or by what class of persons, their salvation is effected. In the abstract, I believe, that they would prefer to be governed by the higher classes, from a feeling that those belonging to the higher classes have turned their minds more to the business of government, have more experience and capacity in the transaction of public business, and are more deserving of their confidence, as being more likely to save them from the French. If, indeed, the Doctor had ever shown any talents as a politician, there might be some reasons for his appointment; but, as it is, it is absurd and mischievous.

" That which we want in Portugal is, that the government should be supported in all its measures in the Brazils, and that it should acquire strength and confidence in its own measures in consequence of that support. The king's minister in the Brazils might be highly useful, by using his influence for that object. We also require that there should be some permanence in the authority of the persons employed to govern this country,

and that men's minds should be diverted from an expectation of change by every vessel which arrives from the Brazils. Here also, the king's minister in the Brazils can be highly useful to us; but I must observe, that it is by the adoption of a line of conduct directly the reverse of that which he has followed lately.

"I hope that my letter to the Prince Regent, written in April, had not arrived in the Brazils before this arrangement was made, as nothing can be more inconsistent with the principles and practice recommended in that letter, than what is contained in the papers which you transmitted to me."

Other causes of anxiety and vexation, at this trying period, were not wanting. The bad conduct of some of the officers and soldiers of the British army, at the time it was quartered at Lisbon, has been elsewhere mentioned; and the charges made by the inhabitants applied equally to the foreign regiments in the English service. By his admirable system, combined with the most prompt and energetic measures, he had succeeded in arresting, and almost eradicating, the evil; but it again broke out at a moment the most inauspicious, when he was particularly eager to merit the support of the people, as well as the army, of Portugal. According to the ancient law of the country, every Portuguese was bound to defend the country against foreign aggression; and, for this reason, to serve in the army, in the militia, or ordenanza: which last was a species of force resembling in its operations the guerillas of Spain, but was acknowledged by the government as an integral portion of the national forces. Early in this campaign some parties of the ordenanza rendered important services; and, latterly, during the invasion, surprised and captured a considerable body of the enemy. They were, however, without uniform, and being considered, like the Spanish guerillas, an irregular force, were not only deprived of the common privileges of war, but, when taken, were condemned by Massena to be shot in cold blood. The manner in which they were treated, as well as the people, by the German hussars, who, unhappily for Portugal, were numerous, and

served in both armies, was little less atrocious than the treatment they experienced from the French. They knew how to proceed with the Germans whom they took prisoners from the enemy, and they invariably retaliated by putting them to death ; but they were not a little puzzled what to do with the German hussars in the British service. They had equal reason to complain of them ; yet they were there in the character of allies and protectors. In this dilemma, plundered alike by German friends and German enemies, they were strongly appealed to by the authorities to resist the French, when they very naturally inquired, "whether they might be permitted to kill the Germans on both sides ?" Lord Wellington instantly wrote to the commander of the British cavalry, enjoining him to remonstrate strongly with the German colonels on the disgrace, as well as impolicy, of permitting their troops to plunder,—that it must deprive them of all the reputation they had previously acquired, and subject them to just retaliation from an injured people. No one, indeed, could be surprised if they should take the law into their own hands ; and he emphatically urged Sir Stapleton Cotton to write to any other officers who might command detachments of hussars.

In the following remarks also on the subject of free trade with the Portuguese colonies, it is apparent how much attention he had paid to the subject, and how justly his views of policy were held subordinate to what he considered due to the interests of our allies.*

"I hope the regency will have the firmness to resist the demand of a free trade with the colonies ; as a boon to the colonies it might answer in some degree, and might be connected with measures of finance which would probably give them a very large revenue. But we have no right, and it is the grossest impolicy in us to demand it. Great Britain has ruined Portugal by her free trade with the Brazils : not only the customs of Portugal to the amount of a million sterling per annum,

* To the Right Hon. Henry Wellesley, Celorico, 10th August, 1810.

are lost, but the fortunes of numerous individuals who lived by this trade are ruined, and Cadiz will suffer in a similar manner, if this demand is agreed to ; Portugal would be now in a very different situation as an ally, if our trade with the Brazils was still carried on through Lisbon ; and I would only ask, is it wise, or liberal, or just, to destroy the power and resources, and absolutely to ruin our allies, in order to put into the pockets of our merchants the money which before went into their treasuries, and would be now employed in the maintenance of military establishments against the common enemy ?”

But while engaged in these and other questions which required considerable time to discuss with clearness and precision, Lord Wellington never for a moment appeared embarrassed or hurried ; his military plans and movements were formed and executed with the same ease and despatch ; and even his private correspondence and communications on innumerable little points, out of his professional range—seemed to go on with the utmost pleasantness. On the fall of Almeida he had withdrawn his forces behind the Mondego ; his cavalry was placed at Celorico ; and with outposts at Guarda and Trancoso, he established his head quarters at Gouvea. By these positions, without the aid of the telegraphs and secret information which he daily received, he could keep a clear and steady eye on the heads of all the enemy’s columns so as to be ever on the alert. On the 18th of August he had the satisfaction to learn that the 3d Swiss regiment had surrendered in Puebla de Sanabria, to General Silveira, and that the ordenanza, and Colonel Le Cor at the head of the legion and other troops had met with farther successes. In a letter to General Hill in which he describes the movements of the enemy,* Lord Wellington observed “that Regnier’s movement to that side the Tagus, although ordered by Bonaparte himself, was certainly a false one, and that the sooner a remedy was applied by recrossing, the better it would be for the enemy.” This is exactly one of those remarks, to which we before alluded, which show how well he understood,

* Celorico, 18th August, 1810.

and could comment upon, his great rival's movements; with how much coolness he could judge and speak of them, as if he were giving directions or correcting a wrong step on the part of his general officers. "If they cross the river," he observes, "you must cross likewise, and resume your old position at Portalegre, and replace Le Cor in his; leaving, however, until you hear farther from me, two regiments of Portuguese cavalry on this side the Tagus, as I have sent Madden's brigade to the Marques de la Romana."

And the following passage proves how closely he watched at this period every opportunity of gaining information, and how well he could compare and combine all the particulars upon any subject of his inquiry, not the least singular of his many uncommon qualities.

"From comparing some returns, picked up at Penamacor, with those which I have of Regnier's corps, I do not think he has any reinforcements, excepting, possibly, of dragoons. He had two squadrons of each of the 17th, 27th, 18th, and 19th dragoons, under General La Houssaye, and three squadrons of the 22d chasseurs, and four of the Hanoverian chasseurs, under General Soult. He received a reinforcement in cavalry, consisting of the four squadrons of each of the 13th and 22d dragoons from the 3th corps; and these two regiments added about 1300 men to his force, but I believe he sent to the 5th corps at the same time La Houssaye's brigade of 1100 men. At least I recollect receiving a report that La Houssaye's brigade had marched into La Mancha. If it did, Regnier has little more cavalry now than he had in May: if he has not, he has about 3500 cavalry. You may probably find out from some of the deserters, whether the regiments of La Houssaye's brigade are still with Regnier's corps. At all events let Fane understand clearly that his business is to observe the enemy, and to give you intelligence; and that I expect him not to engage in any affair unless he has an evident superiority of numbers."

At the same time, while engaged in taking the most efficient measures to conduct his retreat without loss, and to concentrate

his entire force on those points where he could most successfully resist the progress of the enemy, he was incessantly employed in counteracting the ill-effects of the proceedings at the court of Brazils, and the recent changes in the government of Portugal. These repeated intrigues produced the most sinister influence both upon the army and the people, aggravated by unfounded rumours and alarms, which added to the difficulties of his situation. The belief that he was ill supported by the British government, rendered that of Portugal, with the regency and the authorities—more lukewarm in the cause, impairing his vigour and energy, both in the council and the field. He had, moreover, to contend with a secret cabal; a French party, and, more than all, an opposition at home, which set every engine at work, in the full expectation of coming into power on his approaching discomfiture and disgrace—even if he should succeed in saving the wreck of the British army. Their venal journals, taking the tone from the French Moniteur, and giving every private and secret information they could, which had the effect of betraying the British general's plan to the enemy—teemed with the most awful forebodings, calculated, with similar engines at work in other quarters, to produce the consequences they affected so much to deplore. The base and mercenary cry, begun the moment he was compelled to act on the defensive, grew louder the longer the system continued, and was not only re-echoed by the French press, but designedly promoted by Napoleon, who reprinted the English journals at the imperial press, as confirmatory of his own views, and the prosperous condition of his affairs. Nothing could better reconcile France to such a war than the attacks in which they persisted against the British ministry, the army, and the conduct of its commander, which they boldly averred would lead to certain defeat, flight, and the desertion of their allies. So general a combination, and so loud a clamour, soon produced that moral effect still more injurious than mere inferiority of numbers; a tone of despondency and complaint was prevalent throughout the camp; and private letters and reports the most

dismal, spread on all sides, seemed to justify the terrific prophecies of the press, and tended to counteract the best efforts of the British general.

Under the influence of the same spirit, the inhabitants of Lisbon and Oporto took the alarm; and so great was the excitement among the multitude, that nothing short of emigration, or abject submission to the enemy, was talked of. As it was of the last importance, at this critical juncture, to preserve some degree of order, and repress the violence of the mischievous and disaffected, Lord Wellington, undismayed by the confusion and alarm on every side, took active measures to arrest the progress of so dangerous a spirit, with all its disastrous consequences—a task in which he evinced the utmost resolution and intrepidity of character. Opposing himself with manly firmness to the host of evils and difficulties which beset him, he published a *general order*, which carried a sarcasm in its very title, conceived in terms at once so dignified and forbearing, and conveying so keen a satire on the weakness and folly of being carried away by the base clamour of interested and designing men, as speedily recalled the most silly and perverse to a sense of their duty.

Nor was he less decided and persevering with regard to the regency and government of Portugal; he resisted to the utmost those measures which he saw clearly must prove injurious to the general cause. He refused to sanction the list of promotions sent by the Prince Regent of Portugal to Marshal Beresford; and addressed a strong remonstrance to the Regent, and to the governors of the kingdom. He spoke boldly and to the point; he scorned to stand a silent witness to so flagrant a breach of contract, as their recent conduct carried with it. He reminded them that when Marshal Beresford was called from the service of the King of England to take upon him the command of the army of Portugal, it was stipulated with him that the power of reward, as well as of punishment, of the officers and soldiers of the army should be vested exclusively in his hands; or, in other words, that he should exclusively recommend officers for pro-

motion, and approve and order the execution of the sentences of courts-martial.

He recommended, therefore, to the governors of the kingdom to suspend the publication of the list of promotions till the farther pleasure of his Royal Highness, to whom he should give his reasons for such suspension, had been received. The power, he maintained, was lodged in the hands of Marshal Beresford, not because it was wished, by way of compliment, to give him the disposal of a large patronage, as an advantage and an honour to him, but they were given to him in order to facilitate and secure the performance of the arduous duty which he had undertaken—namely, to reform the Portuguese army; and the motive and object in placing these powers in the hands of Marshal Beresford were the benefit of his Royal Highness, and the advantage of the kingdom of Portugal. He begged to call the observation of the governors of the kingdom to the fact, that the system sought to be pursued was not less prejudicial to the interests of his Royal Highness and of the kingdom, than it was inconsistent with the stipulations made with Marshal Beresford, and that it was entirely subversive of all authority in Portugal. It would be impossible to enforce any system of discipline and obedience in the army, or to carry the country through the difficulties which hung over it, if individuals, instead of performing their duty to the satisfaction of their immediate superior on the spot in Portugal, and earning rewards by solid substantial services and real merit, were to acquire them by private applications to the ministers at the court of the Brazils. It was also subversive of all local authority in Portugal. It could not be expected that Marshal Beresford was equal to duties which required that all the military patronage of the government should be placed in his hands, in order to enable him to perform them, if the ministers at the Brazils were to attend to private applications from individuals, any more than the governors of the kingdom could perform the important duties imposed upon them, and which they also had hitherto performed so much to the advantage of

the public, unless they enjoyed the full confidence of the Prince Regent.

Under these impressions, Lord Wellington earnestly recommended to the governors of the kingdom to suspend the publication of the new promotions, in the hopes that the Regent would be induced, by reasoning like that contained in his letter, to cancel the list altogether; and that he would be graciously pleased to order his ministers in the Brasils, in future, to carry into execution strictly the stipulation made with Marshal Beresford, and to recommend no military officer for promotion, or other mark of honour in the army of Portugal who should not have been recommended to his Royal Highness's gracious favour by Marshal Beresford.*

Arguments like these, so clearly and forcibly applied, though conveyed in courtly and becoming language, were received as they were intended to be, and, in great measure, produced the desired effect. Though he maintained the utmost calmness, and even mildness of demeanour, and could display, under the most trying circumstances, great patience and forbearance, Lord Wellington was neither to be trifled with, nor driven from his purpose, by the real or pretended fears sought to be impressed with so much zeal upon the minds of the people; and he completely foiled his enemies, both at home and abroad, by his steady adherence to the principles and plans he had laid down. The knowledge which gave him power, gave him also that calmness and self-possession which enabled him to see and despise the groundless terrors—the blind admiration and awe of the imperial despot, so assiduously inculcated by the enemies of their country. He never even alluded to them, except when they interfered with the objects he had in view; and at the very period when England and her allies expected inevitable destruction, and were trembling for the result, he knew the weakness of the enemy, and obtained proofs of it, with which he buoyed up the sinking hopes of the British

* Celorico, Aug. 14, 1810.

ministry. "The whole of the information before them," he observes,* "will probably convince them, as it has me, that the enemy cannot conquer Spain without employing a force still larger; and that they cannot increase their force in the Peninsula, even admitting that they possess the military means, without increasing their pecuniary and other difficulties and distresses.

"I beg also to draw the attention of his Majesty's government to the opinions delivered by these excellent authorities, of the value of Portugal to the allies, of the mischiefs done to them by its continuance in our possession, and of the benefit which they expect to derive by depriving us of this possession.

"There are other evidences from the same authorities in these papers of the great interest involved in the continuance of the contest of the Peninsula which equally deserve the attention of his Majesty's government; but I wish to draw their attention to those parts of the correspondence which relate to the British army and to this country, as confirming every opinion that I have ever given them upon this part of the subject. It will be unfortunate if Great Britain should not possess the means of securing still farther the position of his Majesty's troops in Portugal, so as to insure the continuance of the contest in the Peninsula, which, it is evident to me, must end favourably for his Majesty's interests, if his army can be maintained in the field in Portugal."

If we reflect that opinions like these were calmly advanced at a moment of so much anxiety and alarm, we shall be enabled to form some idea of the resolute spirit, the coolness and decision of judgment which had directed the energies of this extraordinary man in the greatest exigencies of this protracted and desperate contest. He was the rock of Europe's hope when the storm beat the loudest, and he stood unmoved amidst the shock of parties in the worst times as he did before

* To the Earl of Liverpool, Celorico, August, 1810.

the hosts of Massena in his impenetrable lines of Torres Vedras. Amidst the petty motives and struggles of interests which he invariably despised, it is truly cheering and ennobling to contemplate the high-minded views and unswerving sense of duty by which he was actuated, and how he sought to inspire others with the same lofty courage, patience, and perseverance in overcoming difficulties which at first appear insurmountable. To the doubtful and the timid there is always "a lion in the way," and Europe's "lion" for a long period had indeed stood in the way, and was pointed at by the Whigs in England till the surrounding nations began to be afraid of moving at all. If we turn, on the other hand, to the sentiments of Lord Wellington, what a contrast to the little views and desponding, weak complaints of men like these—so wholly unworthy at all times of wielding the destinies of a great people—do we at once perceive, in the very face of their evil prophecies.

"The opportunity with which I press the war in this country upon the attention of his Majesty's ministers will, I hope, plead my excuse for troubling you for a few moments with my own private feelings upon this subject.

"Nothing can be more irksome to me than the operations which have been carried on for the last year; and it is very obvious that a continuance of the same cautious system will lose the little reputation which I had acquired and the good opinion of the people of this country. Nothing, therefore, could be more desirable to me personally than that either the contest should be given up at once, or that it should be continued with a force so sufficient as to render all opposition hopeless. In either case, the obloquy heaped upon me by the ignorant of our own country as well as of this, and by those of this whom I am obliged to force to exertion, and who, after all, will be but imperfectly protected in their persons and property, would fall upon the government. But seeing as I do more than a chance of final success if we can establish our position in this country, although probably none of a departure from our cautious defensive system, I should not do my duty by the govern-

ment if I did not inform them of the real situation of affairs, and urge them, with importunity, even to greater exertions.

“ I acknowledge that it has appeared to me, till very lately, that the government themselves felt no confidence in the measures which they were adopting in this country; and not an officer has come from England who has not told me that it was generally expected that he would, on his arrival, find the army embarking; and even some have told me that this expectation was entertained by some of the king’s ministers.

“ These sentiments are not encouraging; and I acknowledge that I have been induced to attribute the little exertion which has lately been made in the cause to this want of confidence in the ministers of the government in the result of the contest.

“ If government are really in earnest in the contest, I recommend the following measures to their immediate attention:—First, to order positively the commanding officers in Sicily and Malta to send their troops. Those islands cannot be attacked under present circumstances.

“ Secondly, The same orders to be sent to Halifax.

“ Thirdly, To make me responsible for the safety of Cadiz and Gibraltar, and to leave it to my discretion to draw away such parts of the garrison of those places as I may think proper.

“ Fourthly, To send to Lisbon as much of the disposable Walcheren infantry as may be in any state for service. They shall not be moved from the neighbourhood of that town, and they will probably recover there entirely.

“ Fifthly, To send to the Tagus without loss of time, arms, military stores, clothing, shoes, greatcoats, and blankets; and to authorize me or any body else to give them to Spaniards or Portuguese, as may be thought expedient.

“ Sixthly, To send some victuallers and ordnance store-ships to Lisbon, loaded with provisions, arms, ammunition, powder, shoes, and great coats, and authorize me to send them round to the eastern coast of the Peninsula, for the supply of the garrisons there.

“ Seventhly, To authorize me to assist the Spaniards and

Portuguese with small sums of money, if I should have it in my power, or with stores or provisions, if necessary.

"There is one point to which likewise I wish to draw your attention again, and that is the necessity which exists of keeping a large fleet in the Tagus, as well of ships of the line, as of frigates and small craft."*

We have purposely given the above particulars with a view of showing how the mind of Lord Wellington, while engaged on the most important subjects, could likewise embrace the least details; in the same manner, as was observed on the field of action, his eye, in one rapid glance, took in the entire plan of the battle and the most minute operations. It was the same power which enabled him to take a correct survey of the situation and resources of the enemy, and, while others desponded, to gather fresh energy and confidence as the campaign proceeded. He saw that Napoleon had no means of supporting his armies in Spain, and that Spain could afford him no assistance whatever. His vigorous military system had made matters worse; the partisans had become more numerous, and the separate corps were unable to govern the provinces in which they were quartered. Thus, notwithstanding the large force opposed to the British, Lord Wellington knew that it was not sufficient for their object, which must become every day more difficult. "The people of Portugal," he observed, "are doing that which the Spaniards ought to have done. They are removing their women and properties out of the enemy's way, and taking arms in their own defence. The country is made a desert, and behind every stone wall the French will find an enemy. To this add that they have the British and Portuguese armies immediately in their front, ready to take advantage of any fault or weakness. . . .

"Before this time the Spanish government ought to have had an excellent army formed and equipped in Cadiz, another in Cartagena, a third in the Baleareic islands, and a fourth in

* To the Earl of Liverpool, Celorico, 19th August, 1810.

Galicia, as well as that under the Marques de la Romana—all prepared to take the field, not to engage in general actions, but to give countenance and support to the guerillas and partidas. But I fear there is nothing of the kind. It is not yet too late; and I only hope that if the regency should have Cadiz opened to them, they will not be found in a state of inability to take advantage of that event.*

The following brief exposition of the kind of intrigues still at work is both curious and amusing, and serves to show how well this distinguished soldier could read the characters—a quality in which Napoleon was said so much to excel—of all around him.

“I have received your letter of the 22d. If such frequent instances did not occur, in various quarters, of the intrigues of individuals against the cause, in the success of which they are personally as well as politically interested, one would not believe all the stories one hears of conduct of this description. I cannot conceive what De Souza expects the Portuguese would gain by the appointment of the Duke of Brunswick to command the Portuguese army. This is a little intrigue which has been long on foot, at the bottom of which is —, who is as fond of having a concern in an intrigue as any person I know. And that foolish fellow De Souza has entered into her views to please her, without considering the effect which this arrangement must have upon every thing here. The foundation of all our strength here is the unanimity of our proceedings. I doubt if I should be able to manage the concern if the Duke of Brunswick was to be at the head of the Portuguese army, and I was to meet the Portuguese vanity and self-sufficiency at every corner, encouraged as it would be by him.”†

Early in September, the enemy drove in the British pickets through Freixedas and Alverca; General Cole retired from Guarda, and on the 3d Lord Wellington, also, removed from Celorico to Gouvea, while Regnier advanced upon Castello

* To the Right Hon. Henry Wellesley, Celorico, 20th August, 1810.

† To Charles Stuart, Esq., Alverca, 27th August, 1810.

Branco. It is well known that the Duke of Wellington placed great confidence in the talents of General Hill, and as a proof of this, he early gave him the command of a separate corps which occupied the most advanced positions during the invasion of the enemy. "I rely," he says, "on your prudence and discretion, not to engage yourself in any affair of which the result can be at all doubtful. Retire gradually if you find the enemy threatening you in too great force; and let me hear from you constantly."* On the 9th, Lord Wellington addressed a strong protest to Marshal Massena on his extreme severity—indeed his infringement of the laws of war, by putting to death those soldiers of the *ordenanza*, or militia of the country alluded to before, in which he brought so many powerful arguments to bear upon the question, as to render it the interest of the French commander to abandon so inhuman and unnecessary a measure. He assured Massena, that the Portuguese soldiers would, infallibly, put all the French taken prisoners to death; and that it would literally be out of his power, by any means, to protect them; a circumstance that would give him the greatest pain, inasmuch as he had invariably shown the utmost attention and kindness to the French wounded and prisoners.

As the enemy advanced, Lord Wellington, aware of the excitement it would cause, recommended the government to carry into execution the plan of police he had proposed to them some time before; and to issue a proclamation, directing that all the coffee-houses should be shut up at sunset; that the patroles organized should go every hour day and night; and that all disorderly assemblages of the people should be immediately dispersed. He farther pledged himself to the success of the measure if prudently enforced, so as to accustom the mob of Lisbon to the discipline it must undergo, and preserve public tranquillity at that critical moment. He emphatically declared also, that if he found the government longer hesitating on the subject and alarmed by the mob, or inclined to allow

* Gouvea, 8th September, 1810.

them to go to the lengths in which they would become really formidable, he would forthwith embark the army, whatever might be the prospects of final success in his military operations. In taking that step he should be literally obeying the instructions which he had received, and the Portuguese nation would have the satisfaction of losing itself, and the Peninsula, notwithstanding the best prospects of salvation, by the folly of the people and the pusillanimity of the government.

Lord Wellington attributed much of the existing agitation to the new members of the government, not from evil intention and design, but what was probably worse in men in public situations, during such times—bad heads. “If these foolish fellows,” he exclaimed, “cannot be kept in order we must get rid of them; and one mode of doing so is, that I shall insist upon Souza’s being sent away; and he might go upon an embassy to England to ask for money, or any thing else that might be suggested; and once there we might keep him there. However, it would be preferable first, to try your presence in the government. Pray write to Lord Wellesley, and tell him not to allow the English De Souza, to talk to him upon the affairs of Portugal, with which he has nothing to do.”*

Soon afterwards he had again occasion to reflect, upon the weakness and folly of the Portuguese government. “It appears,” he says, “that you have had a good smart contest respecting our plan of operations. They will end in forcing me to quit them, and then they will see how they will get on. They will then find that I alone kept things in their present state. Indeed the temper of some of the officers in the British army, gives me more concern than the folly of the Portuguese government. I have always been accustomed to have the confidence and support of the officers of the armies which I have commanded; but for the first time, whether owing to *the opposition in England*, or whether the magnitude of the concern is too much for their minds and their nerves, or whether I am

* To Charles Stuart, Esq., Gouvea, 9th September, 1810.

mistaken and they are right; I cannot tell; but there is a system of croaking in the army which is highly injurious to the public service, and which I must devise some means of putting an end to, or it will put an end to us. Officers have a right to form their own opinions upon events and transactions; but officers of high rank or situation, ought to keep their opinions to themselves: if they do not approve of the system of operations of their commander, they ought to withdraw from the army. And this is the point to which I must bring some, if I should not find that their own good sense prevents them from going on as they have lately done. Believe me, that if any body else, knowing what I do, had commanded the army, they would now have been at Lisbon, if not in their ships.

"As for advancing into Spain, the idea is ridiculous. I can only tell you, that of which I am the most apprehensive is, that the enemy will raise the blockade of Cadiz. Unless heaven shall perform a miracle, and give the Spaniards an army, arms, and equipments, we should be ruined by this measure, and then the cause is gone."*

Every word of the foregoing passages evinces the sound judgment and the resolution of an enlightened intellect and a powerful mind. The manner in which he reasons, and reflects upon his own views with reference to the opinions of others, and the general outcry against his plans, shows that he could doubt and criticise his own best matured measures, and, with a discrimination free from all personal vanity and prejudice, examine his own character and actions, estimating them at their real worth, and viewing himself with an impartial eye. His noble frankness and readiness to own that he was wrong, if it could be shown that reason and experience were against him; his freedom from all disguise and pretension,—his desire of appearing only as he really was—unsupported,—in his own native vigour of intellect,—and always under his true colours that it might be seen that "he and he alone did it,"—were no less strong

* Gouvea, 11th September, 1810.

and clearly defined features in his singularly constituted mind. These qualities are still more forcibly developed in the progress of this eventful campaign, and we trace in the following remarkable words, an expression of those sentiments which naturally spring from their cultivation and union in the same character.

"Now, supposing that I am wrong in my plan of operations, and the principal officers in the British army still more wrong, and Principal Souza and the bishop right, and that I have it in my power to act offensively in Spain, how would it be when the French army in Andalusia would be brought against us? Would the Spanish force, which a part of that army keeps shut up in Cadiz be equal to the whole of it in the field? Not unless by a miracle Heaven would add to their numbers."*

Upon the 12th of September, Lord Wellington repaired to Moimenta to confer with Marshal Beresford respecting the movements of the Portuguese, the enemy having now resumed the offensive. He thence also sent directions to Sir Stapleton Cotton with regard to the cavalry, and observed, "I have received your letter at noon, conveying the intelligence of the enemy advancing upon Guarda. I am here dining with Beresford. You had better carry into execution this evening, or early in the morning, the directions contained in my letter written to you yesterday morning at four. Arrange with the officer at Trancoso that he is to fall back by the road before pointed out to you, when your piquets shall be obliged to retire from the front of Celorico."

The enemy still continuing to advance by Guarda, through the valley of the Mondego, Lord Wellington wrote to remind his general officers of the importance of observing with exactness the directions which he had before laid down. He addressed a few lines also to Marshal Beresford from Gouvea on the 15th to the following purport:—"I thought it likely that you would come over this evening; and I did not send to you to let you know that the enemy moved upon Guarda this day

* Gouvea, 11th September, 1810.

in strength, and apparently in earnest, as they have crossed the hill, and are on this side as far as Lagiosa. They likewise moved from Freixedas in strength upon Barçal. My last note from Cotton was at 5 P.M., when he was about to retire through Celorico. I do not yet know where he will be for the night.

"The lady sent to your head-quarters says, that Massena was to be this day at Pinhel, to-morrow at Trancoso. I enclose a note which she brought from Alorna to his wife, which rather shows that the route of the main body is by Viseu. I do not know whether it is Regnier's corps or a part of Ney's which has come through Guarda.—Send off to Trant at Moimenta."

While Massena continued his march in three columns upon Viseu, Lord Wellington gradually withdrew his forces along the left bank of the Mondego. Upon the 22nd, the French army occupied Viseu, as had been expected, in force: and the British general leaving the light division, together with the cavalry, on the Criz, retired with his main body behind the Alva. These movements on the part of the enemy had enabled him to call in all his detached corps, while he at the same time secured Coimbra with six brigades of infantry, against any advanced guard that might have been pushed forward. Having united the whole of his forces, it was Lord Wellington's object to cross the Mondego, move up the troops from Coimbra, and take up a strong position covering Coimbra and the communication with Oporto, which he hoped to be able to preserve.

So far the retreat had been conducted with success, the enemy having already suffered considerably, and having, in Lord Wellington's opinion, taken decidedly the worst road in the whole kingdom, bad as many of the roads were. It lay upon the north of the Mondego, and traversed the Serra de Busaco to Coimbra, one of the branches of the northern range of hills which bounds the valley of the Vouga. It terminates abruptly with a steep fall upon the Mondego; and another mountain range, called the Serra de Murcella, continues the line of Busaco from the opposite bank of that river. It had become evident that the enemy had failed to take advantage of the other routes, leading by the

Estrella and the mountains of Castello Branco, upon Abrantes and the Zezere. Their line of march was now between two roads, the one traversing the Murcella range on the south of the Mondego, the other, Busaco, on the north, and both leading into Portuguese Estremadura.

Massena, having passed the Criz in full force on the 23rd, Lord Wellington, with his usual promptness and expedition, executed a bold manœuvre, moved to the north of the Mondego, and occupied Busaco. The French general experienced greater difficulty in making his movements than he expected; some of his small detachments had been surprised by the Portuguese horse and parties of the ordenanza; and, instead of having succeeded in cutting off or forcing the allies to a battle, Lord Wellington had foiled all his plans, deprived him of the power of subsisting his troops, and placed himself in a formidable position so as to protect the town of Coimbra. It embraced a range of hills, viz., those of the Serra de Busaco, situated in a mountainous country of considerable extent in the province of Beira, of which Coimbra is the capital. Indeed this province is almost entirely surrounded by a chain of mountains; along the eastern range lie the towns of Guarda, Celorico, Trancoso, and Viseu, opposite the Spanish frontier; and the northern range, extending across the whole kingdom of Portugal, separates Beira from the northern provinces. The Mondego, running parallel with the northern range, takes a westerly course through the interior. It was on the small chain springing from the right bank of the river, as already described, that Lord Wellington took up a position almost impregnable, except on one point; and there he determined to give battle to the French.

Notwithstanding the skill and caution evinced by Massena, Lord Wellington, by his well-matured plans, and the celerity with which he executed them, had already succeeded in cutting off his communications with Almeida, and was soon heard to declare that such was the situation of his great rival, that he literally "only possessed the ground upon which his army stood," he

was, in fact, isolated in the midst of an enemy's country, and on all sides surrounded only by enemies.

In circumstances like these, with death and famine staring him in the face, victory to the French commander became a necessity. He must strike a blow and succeed, or perish. He could only exist by the destruction of the British army, and striking terror into a whole nation. His object, therefore, was single; his last resource to pursue and attack; and he pressed on with his forces concentrated in one solid host. Never was a general more eager for battle. He had provisions but for a limited term; and was then actually subsisting upon the large stores of which he had so unexpectedly obtained possession by the fearful catastrophe at Almeida. Without these he could not have persevered in his invasion of Portugal, and Lord Wellington would have been in a still more formidable position than he was; for Massena must have fought a battle or retreated before the 25th of September. He now distributed biscuits of Almeida for fifteen days, and made his calculations to reach Coimbra before he could be effectually opposed by his adversary. But he was again deceived in his expectations; that adversary stood in his direct line of march prepared to receive him. Before the 26th, the whole of the 6th and of the 2d French corps crossed the Criz in the neighbourhood of Santa Combado; General Pack's brigade, and General Craufurd's division, had withdrawn to the fine position fixed upon for the army on the summit of the Serra de Busaco. They were sharply followed by the whole of the corps of Ney and Regnier; but the retreat was conducted with so much regularity, that the troops took up their positions with very trifling loss. The same afternoon the 4th Portuguese caçadores, under Major Smyth, were engaged with Regnier's corps, and showed that steadiness and gallantry which others of the Portuguese troops subsequently manifested.

As the enemy's entire force was on the right of the river, it was evident that he intended to force the British position; and it was then that General Hill made that masterly movement to

cross it by his left, leaving Colonel le Cor with his brigade on the Serra de Murcella to cover the right of the army, and General Fane, with his division of Portuguese cavalry and the 13th light dragoons, in front of the Alva, to observe and check the movements of the enemy's cavalry on the Mondego. With this exception, the whole of the army was collected on the Serra de Busaco, with the British cavalry observing the plain in the rear of its left, and the road leading from Mortagoa to Oporto, through the mountainous tract which connects the Serra de Busaco with the Serra de Caramula. The enemy was joined by the 8th corps in the British front on the 26th, but did not make any serious attack on that day, although the light troops on both sides were engaged throughout the line.

The French army amounted to more than 70,000 men, distinguished alike for their discipline and their valour, and animated by the recollection of many a hard-won field. They were opposed by 25,000 British, and upwards of 30,000 Portuguese,—regular troops, who were this day to encounter their invaders side by side, with English soldiers, in a general battle. No fewer than three French Marshals, of whom the Prince of Essling was the head, directed the movements of this important combat, which might be said to decide the fate of Portugal.

Long before dawn on the 27th, the sentinels at their posts could distinguish the note of preparation in the French camp, and the allies already stood to arms. General Hill occupied the right, with Leith upon his left; and the Lusitanian legion held in reserve. Next in order of battle was the third division under General Picton; the first division near the convent, with the brigade of Pack in advance along the descent. Here, on the left, was placed the light division;—a rise in the ground and some rocks concealed their line from that of the enemy, while a brigade of German cavalry in their rear was the only object exposed to their view. The fourth division, under Cole, occupied the extreme left, covering the road which led across to Milheada, where the British cavalry were drawn up in reserve.

Both British and Portuguese artillery was distributed along the front at all points where it could be employed with effect.

About six in the morning of the 27th, the enemy made two desperate attacks upon the British position—one on the right, the other on the left of the loftiest portion of the Serra. That on the right was made by two divisions of the 2d corps, on that part of the Serra occupied by the 3d division of infantry. A division of French infantry reached the summit of the ridge, when it was attacked in the most gallant manner by the 88th regiment, commanded by Colonel Wallace, the 45th, under the command of Colonel Meade, and by the 8th Portuguese regiment, under Colonel Douglas, directed by Major-general Picton. These three corps advanced with the bayonet, and drove the enemy from the advantageous ground which they had gained. The other division of the 2d corps attacked farther on the right, by the road leading by St. Antonio de Cantara, also in front of General Picton's division. These were repulsed before they could reach the summit of the ridge, by the 74th, under Colonel Trench, and the brigade of Portuguese of the 9th and 21st regiments, under the command of Champelmond directed by Colonel Mackinnon. Major-general Leith also moved to his left, to the support of General Picton, and assisted in the defeat of the enemy.

On the left, the enemy advanced to the attack with three divisions of infantry of the 6th corps, on the part of the Serra occupied by the light division of infantry, and by the brigade of Portuguese infantry. Besides these attacks, the light troops of the two armies were engaged throughout the day; and the Portuguese regiments showed remarkable steadiness and gallantry.

The loss sustained by the French in their attack of the 27th is stated to have been very heavy. They are said to have left 2000 killed on the field, besides an immense number in wounded, prisoners, and deserters. Three generals of division were wounded, and General Simon was taken prisoner, with three colonels, many subordinate officers, and 250 men.

On the ensuing day, Massena only renewed the attack by the fire of his light troops; but his great rival having already defeated his first object of turning the British right, penetrated his real design. During the attack, a large body of infantry and cavalry moved from the left of the enemy's centre to the rear, from which the cavalry were seen in full march from the road to Mortagoa, over the mountains, towards Oporto. But Lord Wellington, aware that he would thus attempt to turn the British left, had directed Colonel Trant to march to Sardaô, with the intention that he should occupy the mountains, but unfortunately he was sent round by Oporto by the general officer commanding in the north, in consequence of a small detachment of the enemy being in possession of S. Pedro do Sul; and, notwithstanding the efforts which he made to arrive in time, he did not reach Sardaô till the 28th at night, after Massena was in possession of the ground. The latter had it now in his power to throw the whole of his army upon the road by which he could avoid the Serra de Busaco, and reach Coimbra, by the high road to Oporto. By one unfortunate accident, Massena had, in so far, succeeded in turning the position of the allies, although he had lost a battle; and, although in possession of the field, the British general was in a situation to be cut off from his retreat on Coimbra, or exposed to a general engagement on less favourable ground. No time was to be lost; and he instantly retired from the Serra de Busaco upon the reinforcements in his rear. The corps of Hill was ordered to recross the Mondego, and marched upon Thomar, while the divisions of the main body of the allied force defiled to the rear by convenient routes without the least disorder. The enemy also broke up in the mountains on the night of the 28th, and was in full march for Coimbra. His advanced guard reached Avelans on the road from Oporto on the 29th, but Lisbon, the object of Massena's expedition, was as far as ever from his view; he found the whole of the British army on the left of the Mondego, in possession of the

ground between the Serra de Busaco and the sea ; and they had yet the famous lines of Torres Vedras on which to retreat.

Although it is evident that Lord Wellington had not succeeded in the immediate object which he had in view, in occupying the Serra de Busaco, he did not, according to his own declaration, regret having opposed the enemy upon that point. He considered that it afforded him a favourable opportunity of showing the description of troops of which his army was composed ; he had brought the Portuguese levies into action with the enemy, and they had shown the good effect of the high discipline they had received, and fought in a manner worthy of their best days. That the commendation bestowed by Lord Wellington on their conduct, and that of all the British troops, was well merited, appeared by the comparatively small losses they had sustained ; those of the former not exceeding 500 in killed and wounded, and the latter not more than 600, including the officers. Nor was it less honourable to them, and gratifying to their commander, that during the entire retreat, and throughout the severe conflict, both armies had conducted themselves with perfect order and regularity. This was to be attributed wholly to the excellent arrangements previously made by their able commander, owing to which, the several corps performed their operations without confusion ; they suffered no privations, were exposed to no useless encounters, and no unnecessary fatigue. For the same reason there had been no loss of stores ; there was no prospect of hardship and want before them—the invariable cause of insubordination—such as fell to the lot of the unfortunate army of Massena, both during the invasion and the retreat. Being in the highest order and state of discipline, the British army, as a natural consequence, was also in the best spirits.

After the occupation of Coimbra, the attention of Massena was principally directed to strengthening his own posts, and reconnoitring the position of the allies. For some time there was a good deal of skirmishing, in which the Portuguese

cavalry realized the high promise it had already given, and acquitted itself with credit in various encounters with the highly disciplined and brave dragoons of France. On the 14th of October the advanced guard of the British was attacked by the enemy with the utmost impetuosity and gallantry; but after a severe struggle, he was finally repulsed and driven back into the town.

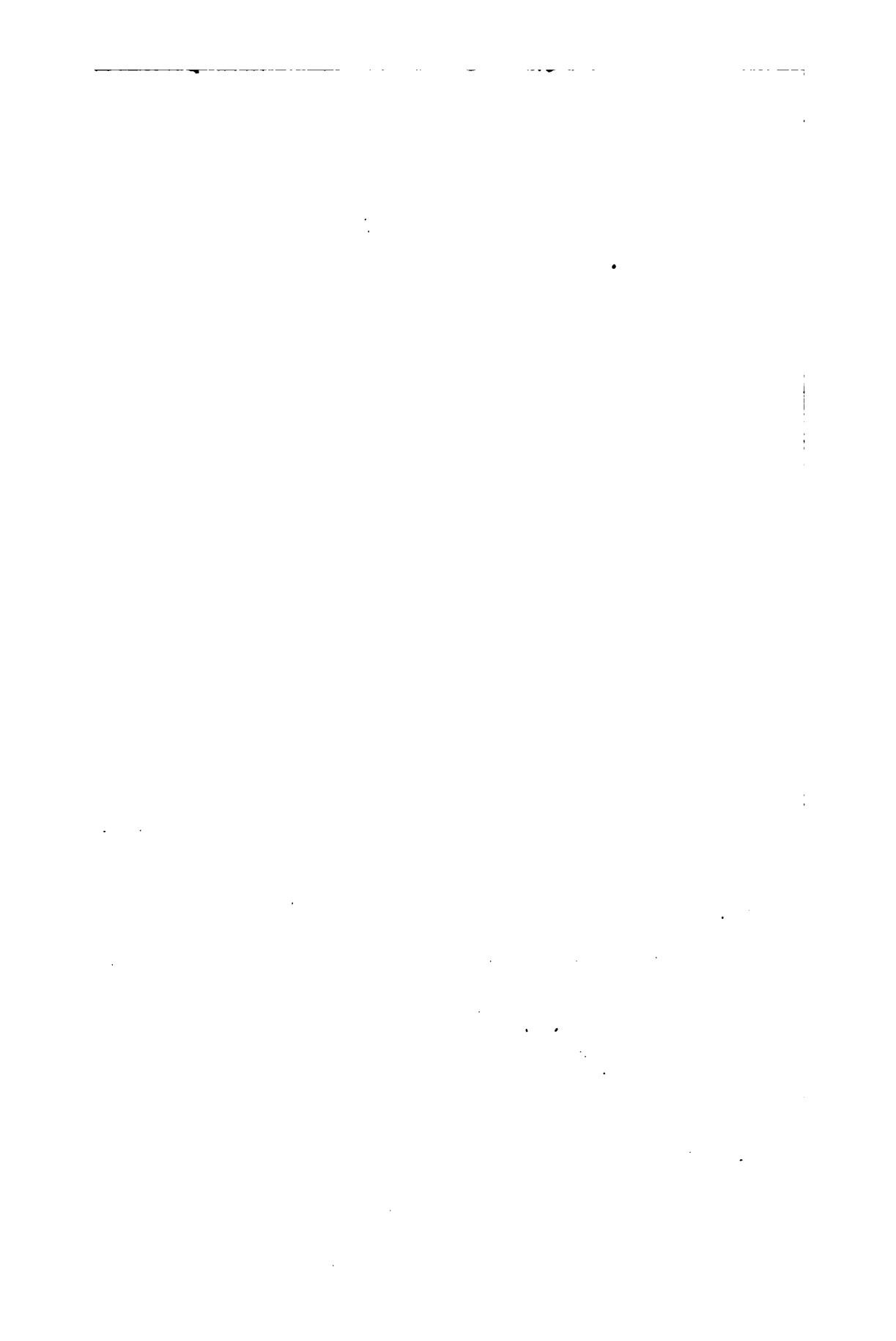
On every account, therefore, Lord Wellington was far from indulging apprehensions for the result of the campaign. He expressed his confidence that the enemy would not obtain possession of Portugal during that year, or prevent his retreat to the positions in front of Lisbon, whenever desirable, without difficulty or loss. "My own opinion is," he observes,* "that the French are in a scrape. They are not a sufficient army for their purpose, particularly since their late loss, and that the Portuguese army have behaved so well; and they will find their retreat from this country a most difficult and dangerous operation." In consequence, also, of the military system he had pursued of clearing the entire country before him during his retreat, though the inhabitants, of every class, had been doomed to feel all the horrors of invasion and war, that system was no less fatal to the enemy. However harsh it might seem to resort to so extreme a measure, Lord Wellington conceived it to be essential to the cause, and a duty he owed both to Great Britain and to Portugal, from which he could not swerve; that it was a necessity that could not be avoided; that the inhabitants must make the sacrifice for their own salvation; and that it was preferable to remaining to afford assistance to, and become the prey of, an implacable enemy. The scenes to which it gave rise were doubtless deplorable in the extreme; and it is natural that the people themselves, in abandoning their homes and every thing they held dear, should make little distinction between the causes by which they suffered, and in the bitterness of their feelings, have vented their maledictions upon both

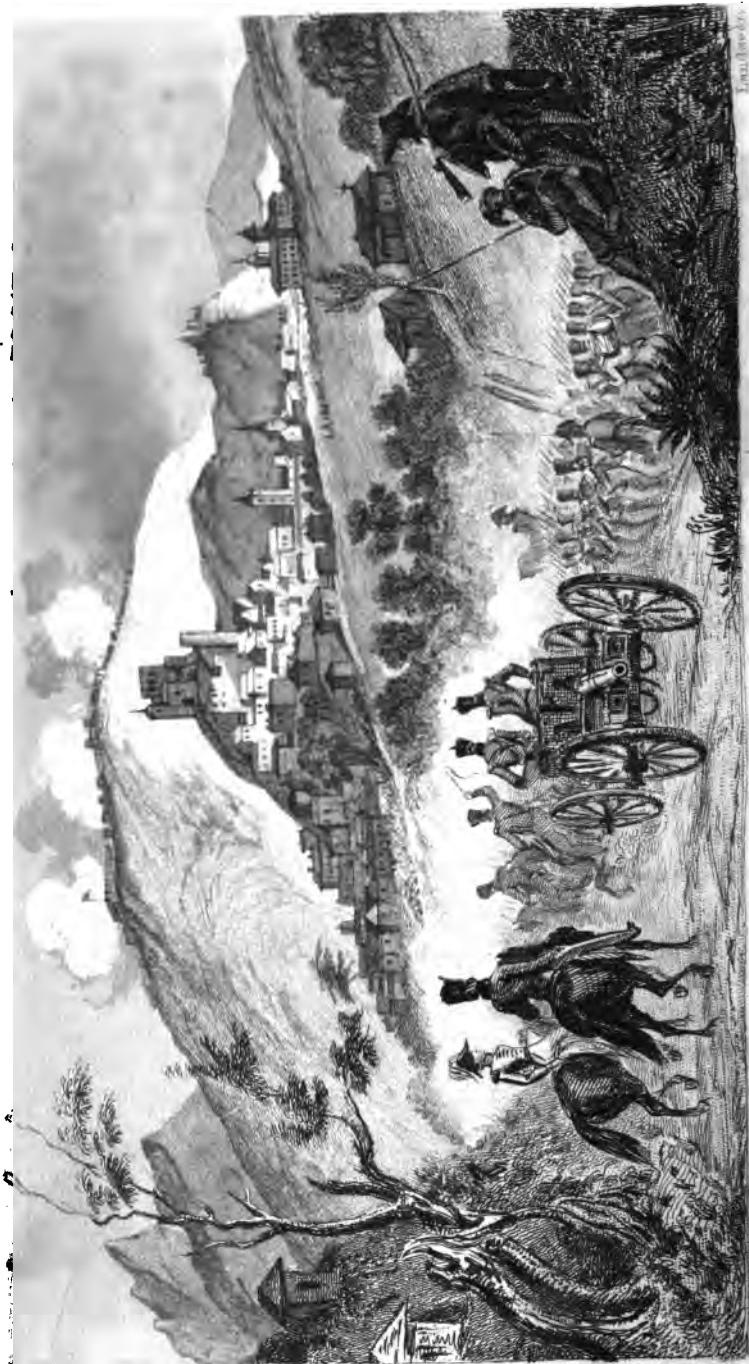
* To the Right Hon. Henry Wellesley. Leyria, 3rd October, 1810.

parties. The alternative was desperate—to remain was death by the sentence of their own government, whatever mercy they might hope to experience at the hands of their invaders.

As the tide of war rolled back upon them every town became a desert, and the country around and behind them one barren wilderness. Even the spirit of Massena quailed, and his heart filled with evil forebodings as he traversed the barren waste before him : “the enemy,” he exclaimed, “burns and destroys every thing, as he evacuates the country. He forces the inhabitants to abandon their homes under pain of death ; Coimbra, a town of 20,000 inhabitants is deserted. We find no provisions. The army is subsisted on Indian corn, and the few vegetables we found remaining on the ground.” The order of the regency was in fact rigidly enforced, and whatever could not be carried off by the people was destroyed. The roads were literally blocked up with mingled masses ; and carts, waggons, mules, horses, and bullocks, all were in one confused heap striving which should first leave the well-known domiciles and places of old resort. There might be seen mothers, their eyes streaming with tears, bearing infants in their arms ; even young women delicately clad, on foot, with those of more tender age separated in the throng from their families. Men with heavy hearts, in silent sorrow were assisting the feeble and aged on their way. The flanks of the British columns were covered with the flying inhabitants ; and all who had been enabled to procure means of transport thought themselves fortunate, and offered up thanks to heaven. On the army reaching its fortified positions, the mass of fugitives divided and took different directions—one passing through the lines to seek an asylum at Lisbon ; the other crossing the south bank of the Tagus to reach the districts removed from the enemy.

The hour was now come to take possession of the famous barrier lines, that were to prove the safe-guard of Portugal. The allied forces entered by divisions ; and it was so well arranged that on the last day of the retreat, each general was met by the officer appointed to conduct the troops to the several





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THE GREAT WEST PLAINS
WITH A HISTORY OF THE
LAW PARKS OF THE UNITED STATES
AND THE CANADIAN PROVINCES

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positions which had been assigned them. With the exception of one scene of confusion that occurred from the extreme narrowness of the streets in Condeixa, the march from Busaco had been conducted with perfect ease, nearly 200 miles, the allies retiring slowly in echelons by the roads of Espinal and Leyria till they reached the banks of the Tagus and Torres Vedras.

The French general had been compelled to halt at Coimbra where his soldiers committed great disorders, during three days. On resuming his march he left behind him nearly 5000 sick and wounded, and within three days afterwards, as if to substantiate Lord Wellington's assertion that the French possessed only the ground they stood upon, the whole of these with the French hospitals, and all that was left in Coimbra, were captured by the Portuguese Militia, commanded by Colonel Trant. Other parties of the Militia commanded by active English officers, like Colonels Miller, and Wilson, and many of the ordenanza hung upon the flanks and rear of the enemy, surprised their detachments, and in various ways caused them considerable loss. Massena had no resource but to press forward with the forlorn hope of "driving the English," as he had expressed it, "into their ships." But the misgivings which he had already begun to feel were more than realized by the sight which met his view on his march from Sobral through which he had just followed the rear-guard of the British columns. The vast and impregnable works of Torres Vedras met his astonished eye. From his own observation no less than the reports which thronged from all sides, he found that one grand defensive position had been reserved—in case of necessity, extending above thirty miles, protected upon its right by the river Tagus, on its left by the sea, and fortified by every expedient which the military art could devise. He is said to have employed several days in making his reconnaissance, and particular observations on every part of these stupendous works, and to have come at last to the mortifying conviction that to attempt to assail and to carry them would require much skill and be a mere waste of labour, which might elsewhere be more profitably employed.

Massena divided his army, however, into three corps, which might justly be termed an army of observation, and sat down very philosophically before those barriers which he could not pass through. The whole presented the appearance of some enormous fortress, or rather of a camp ; from which all approach had been cut off; rock, water, rugged steep and precipice ; all the advantages of site, rendered more impregnable by labour and art, combining to render them unassailable. Different chains of redoubts were skilfully disposed so as to increase every natural difficulty. They contained batteries from which 600 pieces of cannon could sweep far and wide, commanding as they did every practicable point. A part of the lines was also flanked by British gun-boats on the Tagus. The communications between the different portions of the works were complete ; and the various roads and positions amidst the vast amphitheatre of hills were perfectly open and free for the movements of the separate corps. The army under Romana, consisting of two Spanish divisions, had already joined ; besides which, numerous bodies of the militia and ordenanza formed part of this mighty garrison of an entire nation. A noble body of British marines was held in reserve near Lisbon ; a powerful fleet lay ready in the river ; and the eyes and the thoughts of all were now anxiously directed towards the interesting scene where the full development, if not the catastrophe, of the fearful drama was to be enacted.

Soon, however, it became imperative upon the French commander to adopt some strong and decisive measures, for, added to the excessive annoyance upon his flanks and rear, a wasting sickness, owing chiefly to fatigue and privation, broke out in his ranks, and only miseries and bitter complaints were heard.

Still Massena was not a general to be scared by dangers or difficulties of any kind. He looked his enemy boldly in the face, and acted with the decision of a man who knows his own strength and weakness ; sees things as they really are, and relies only upon his own resources. The better to obtain supplies, large bodies of cavalry, in a wide circuit, swept the banks of the

Tagus; a strong force was detached towards Thomar, and by commanding some of the strong places in his rear he was enabled to check the incursions of those numerous bands of irregular troops which from Abrantes as far as Peniche had gradually drawn closer round his positions so as to confine his operations and deprive him of the power of gaining support from the country. General Loison, with a strong division, was detached to Santarem, all the boats he could obtain possession of were collected upon the Zezere, rafts were formed, and whatever articles of food could be found were deposited at convenient places; and posts were established beyond Ourem. Massena, in short, was taking secret and active measures to ensure his retreat; Montbrun, with the main body of the cavalry, was stationed near Leyria; he himself moved to Torres Novas, and the hospitals and stores were placed in security at Santarem.

Meantime Lord Wellington, while intently watching the motions of his adversary, cutting off his resources, and throwing every obstacle and impediment in the way of his retreat, was incessantly annoyed by the ignorant and absurd proceedings of the regency, which, like the juntas of Spain, attempted to dictate to the British general the measures he ought to pursue. His calmness and equanimity were often put to a severe test, till, finding the annoyance becoming more and more intolerable, he was compelled to put it down with the strong hand. "I have just received your letter," he says to Mr. Stuart;* I beg you will do me the favour to inform the regency, and, above all, Principal Souza, that his Majesty and the Prince Regent having intrusted me with the command of their armies, and exclusively with the conduct of the military operations, I will not suffer them, nor any body else, to interfere with them; that I know best where to station my troops, and where to make a stand against the enemy; and I shall not alter a system, framed upon mature consideration, upon any suggestion of theirs.

* Rio Mayor, 6th October, 1810.

"I am responsible for what I do, and they are not; and I recommend to them to look to the measures for which they are responsible, which I long ago recommended to them—namely, to provide for the tranquillity of Lisbon, and for the food of the army, and of the people, while the troops shall be engaged with the enemy.

"As for Principal Souza, I beg you to tell him from me that I have had no satisfaction in transacting the business of this country since he has been a member of the government; and that being embarked in a course of military operations, of which I hope to see the successful termination, I shall continue to carry them on to their end; but that no power on earth shall induce me to remain in the Peninsula for one moment after I shall have obtained his Majesty's leave to resign my charge, if Principal Souza is to remain either a member of the government, or to continue at Lisbon. Either he must quit the country, or I shall; and, if I should be obliged to go, I will take care that the world, in Portugal at least, and the Prince Regent, shall be made acquainted with my reasons. From the letter of the 3d instant, which I have received from Don Miguel Forjas, I had hoped that the government was satisfied with what I had done and intended to do; and that, instead of endeavouring to render all further defence fruitless, by disturbing the minds of the populace at Lisbon, they would have done their duty by adopting measures to secure the tranquillity of the town. But I suppose that, like all other weak individuals, they add duplicity to their weakness; and that their expressions of approbation, and even gratitude, were intended to convey censure. I request you to communicate this letter to the regency, and to transmit it to the secretary of state for foreign affairs."

This was effectual; Lord Wellington continued at the head of the allied armies, and Principal de Souza shrank back into his native insignificance. There was no mincing of terms, or equivocation, in a letter like this; and, instead of palliating, it

went at once to the root of the evil, in pursuance of the Roman maxim, to “cut off the diseased part with the sword.”*

All, in fact, that he asked from the Portuguese regency was, that peace should be preserved in the capital, and provisions supplied *for their own troops* while employed in that part of the country. He repeatedly declared, that he had no doubt of ultimate success, but that as the result of a battle, even under the best arrangements, was uncertain, he was anxious that the government should adopt preparatory arrangements to take out of the enemy’s way those persons and their families who would suffer if they were to fall into his hands. Considerations like these, and by which he was invariably actuated throughout his brilliant career, in his treatment of prisoners—in his correspondence with the French Marshals, and, on all occasions, to mitigate, as far as circumstances would possibly admit, the evils of war, reflect the highest honour both upon his judgment and his feelings. And in the events which were now fast approaching, he had still wider scope in which to display the high motives by which he was directed; and the rare qualities he possessed were more fully developed, as they will appear, in the extraordinary incidents and passages of his active and eventful life.

During the early part of November the British head-quarters were at Pero Negro, with the main body of the army. While in perfect safety, it could thus operate, with decisive effect, upon the retiring columns of the enemy. The position of Massena was little changed; and it was, at length, ascertained that he was secretly preparing a bridge at Santarem and Barquina, and that, owing to the criminal negligence of the government and local authorities, he had been enabled to seize boats, stores, and provisions—which had not been removed according to the British general’s directions—to a very considerable extent. General Fane was immediately detached

* *Vulnus immedicabile ense recidendum est.*

from the British army with a force of cavalry and infantry to the left of the Tagus, it becoming evident that Massena had already an intention of commencing his retreat. In fact, on the night of the 14th, he broke up in excellent order from before the British lines, and his first movements were made with great ability, and with the utmost secrecy. Besides the darkness of the night, he was favoured by a thick fog, beneath which General Clausel retired cautiously from Sobral. The next morning the whole of the 8th corps of the enemy passed through the defile of Alemquer, protected by a strong rear-guard, and proceeded towards Torres Novas. At the same time the second corps broke up from Alhandra, and retreated upon Santarem.

Secret, however, as were the movements of Massena, they had not escaped the observation of his rival. The allied army was in motion early the ensuing morning, when he found the French had withdrawn from Alhandra and Sobral; two divisions being quickly in pursuit on the roads to Santarem and to Alemquer. Still he was most cautious in his proceedings, being aware that the French general was in daily expectation of reinforcements, and, owing to the folly of the government, was in possession of transports to enable him to invade the Alentejo. General Hill was directed to move slowly by the road of Villa Franca and Castanheira to Carregado with the advanced guard, and to send the 13th light dragoons from St. Antonio to Tojal, to observe the force in his front. It was soon evident that the enemy intended to retire either across the Zezere into Spain, or across the Tagus into Spain, or across the same river to attack Abrantes. He instantly directed that boats should be brought up the Tagus, that Hill's corps should pass over to Salvaterra, so as to obviate any attack on Abrantes, and, perhaps, cut off his retreat by the Tagus. So complete, indeed, were the measures taken for pursuit, while he still kept his army so as to avoid a battle, that the advanced guard had reached Cartaxo on the 17th, and four hundred prisoners were

taken by a rapid movement of Sir Brent Spencer and Major-general Leith.

As it was now clear that the retreat of Massena had been one of strict necessity, and no manœuvre, as was at first suspected, to draw the British general from his lines and to join his expected reinforcements, Lord Wellington became more bold and determined in his pursuit. The enemy, lately so formidable, was now in full retreat. He had constructed two bridges over the Zezere, one of which had been carried away by the floods ; and believing that he was now intent on evacuating the country, Lord Wellington determined to attack him in his position on the heights of Santarem. Rising abruptly from the Tagus, and extending northward several miles, the hill on which the city stands affords an admirable position for an army acting on the defensive.* The walls of Santarem present a rampart upon its left, in front stretches a lower range of acclivities, protected by the waters of the Rio Mayor, at once concealing the main position and admitting of excellent outposts. The only ground by which it is accessible to an army approaching by the great road from Lisbon consists of a wild and open flat, the latter part of which is traversed by a raised causeway. On one side of the Ponte Seca is an impassable marsh, and on the other, the only way by which the city can be approached, it is covered as far as the Tagus with reeds, and sedges, and deep water-cuts, such as to present serious obstacles to an assailant.

The British commander had already made his dispositions, and the troops were in motion. While still engaged with the advanced posts of the enemy, he continued his reconnoissance, and soon perceived that Massena had taken the same advantage of the fine position Santarem offered him as he had himself done of that of Busaco during his own retreat. And, like the French marshal on first viewing the heights of Torres Vedras, Lord Wellington now expressed some surprise on finding that, instead of

* In the latter part of the civil war of 1833-34, we saw Don Miguel in position here for many weeks.—ED.

having left merely a strong rear-guard to cover his retreat, Massena had occupied the position in force, which, in addition to its natural difficulties, was strengthened with long lines of *abbatis*, with strong outworks and intrenchments.

The marshal had made good use of his time, and, following the example set by his great rival, determined to retain his hold upon the country by the same means. His antagonist, however, still more warily resolved not to imitate the French commander in attacking him under the same circumstances as he had himself been attacked upon the heights of Busaco. Accordingly, being by no means so intent on fighting those desperate battles of which he had been accused in England, he instantly countermanded his orders and withdrew his troops, doubtless not a little to the disappointment of his watchful enemy.

After the heavy rains, and during the winter months, it would be difficult, if not impossible for the British army to turn a position like that [occupied by the enemy, and to attempt to assail it in front, or at all in present circumstances, would have been to play into the hands of a wily adversary.

Always self-possessed and moderate in the hour of success; with far more wisdom than even Massena had given him credit for, the English general distributed his troops into cantonments at Cartaxo, where he had established his head-quarters, and in the surrounding villages. All the routes leading to the British lines were secured; the positions of Torres Vedras were occupied and protected against any attack, even that by the road which passes to the north of the Monte Junta. General Hill, on the left bank of the Tagus, prevented the enemy from entering the Alentejo, keeping up his communications with the ferry opposite Alhandra by means of floating bridges, so that he might re-enter the famous lines at any moment. The heights of Almeda, which command both the anchorage and the city of Lisbon on the south, were strongly retrenched, to prevent any danger from the co-operation of the enemy with other forces, should they by any chance be enabled to obtain possession of the Alentejo.

The campaign appeared to have now terminated for the season, and both armies remained in the positions they had already occupied. Massena fixed his head-quarters at Torres Novas, keeping a strong post at Punhete in his rear, and a bridge prepared across the Zezere. The numerous boats of which he had got possession would enable him, when reinforced, to resume the offensive, and the extent, as well as strength of his positions admitted a wider range for his large bodies of cavalry and moveable columns to levy contributions and draw supplies. In many districts the orders of government had not been enforced, and the population, with all their possessions and the products of the last harvest, became the means of sustaining the enemy in the country till reinforcements and fresh stores should arrive. To hasten their arrival General Foy was despatched by Massena to state exactly his situation to Napoleon, and at the same time to convey orders to General Gardanne, who commanded on the Agueda, to furnish the required supplies. With an escort of 5000 men the latter succeeded in approaching within a few leagues of the French camp, when, being attacked by a party of the ordenanza, and alarmed at a report of the French having retired,—and that the allies were in possession of Abrantes,—he precipitately retraced his steps. By this unfounded panic he lost almost every thing, before he reached the frontiers, by the attacks of the irregular troops ; and on his arrival General Drouet, then commanding upon the Coa, set out, at the head of 10,000 men, being determined to reopen the communications with Massena. He reached Leyria, and took up a position on the right of the main army, having taken care to keep open the line of retreat upon the frontiers. A body of militia, consisting of several regiments, attacked the troops which he had stationed at Trancosa, but were repulsed and driven across the Douro with great slaughter. Owing to this severe check no further effort was made in the open field against the enemy by this useful description of force, although full of confidence when directed, as they had before been, by the skill and enterprise of men like Trant, Wilson, and Miller. Indeed, Silveira's former suc-

cess and that of Bacellar had made them rash and daring, and had not Gardanne given way to idle fears, the same result must have attended the attack of Grant's party.

Though the British general still considered active operations imprudent, he had greatly strengthened his means, and stood prepared to resume the offensive. Before the close of the year he had begun to threaten the flanks and rear of the enemy across the Mondego. It was not now as when Almeida fell, and the storm of war rolled onwards too weighty for resistance. It had broken its fury upon the mountain battlements of Torres Vedras, and the tide of success had been hurled back against the invaders—so soon compelled to fortify themselves in positions almost unassailable before those whom they had pursued. The highest hopes and surest predictions of Wellington had been fulfilled; Portugal was not lost; the imperial eagles had not looked down from the ancient towers of the Roman. The allied armies had increased both in numbers and efficiency; while subsisting in an enemy's country, with battle, toil, and privation, had impaired both the moral and numerical force of the French. Both armies had received considerable reinforcements, and the total numbers of the belligerents, without enumerating the irregular troops of all kinds, were not less, at the opening of 1811, than 180,000 men. During the more stirring period of this ably contested campaign, Lord Wellington had exhibited an activity and ardour of mind not to be surpassed. Although by his admirable method, order, and punctuality, he was enabled to despatch more business, and more promptly in the same given time than other men, his personal exertions had nevertheless been very great. Continually absorbed by the importance of the eventful crisis, he appeared more indifferent than he had ever been to things of trivial import—to every thing not connected with the plans and actions of the war. He was sparing in his diet, and for some time slept in his clothes. His letters are frequently dated at four o'clock in the morning, and by five he was on horseback visiting his advanced posts.

The energy and noble devotion by which he was himself ani-

mated infused itself into his officers and his army; nor was it without favourable influence upon his allies. As the contest warmed, the whole country seemed to recover something of its ancient spirit under the guardian genius of a single man. Even Lisbon looked less like a city of merchants than a military school; and when the garrison was called away to the army, its towers and strongholds were defended by British marines; and others assisted in working the guns in the batteries. The banks of the Tagus along the British right were flanked by armed launches, and seven sloops of war were cruising; and on another side a double line of fortifications, mounted with heavy artillery, and manned by a body of 3000 seamen, presented an impregnable front to the enemy. Yet at this period the ominous voice of the Opposition in England was heard devoting Lisbon itself to approaching destruction. "The campaign," it said, "would be renewed in February with such an accumulation of force on the part of the enemy, as must make even the protection of Lisbon hopeless, much less the deliverance of the Peninsula."

END OF VOL. I.



